

Nepal lifts ban on political parties

KATHMANDU (R) — Nepal's beleaguered government, facing growing demands for multi-party democracy, said Sunday it was lifting a 30-year-old ban on political parties. The move was announced in a communique issued by King Birendra's palace and reported by state television. At least 50 people were killed in Kathmandu Friday when thousands of pro-democracy protesters tried to march on the palace. The television gave no details but said more announcements would be made later. It said the 44-year-old king had met four opposition leaders — two leftists and two from the banned Nepal Congress Party which is spearheading the movement for restoration of democracy. One of the Nepal congress leaders was Gita Prasad Koirala, brother of B.P. Koirala who was the country's prime minister in 1960 during Nepal's brief experience of parliamentary democracy. Koirala's government was dissolved by King Mahendra, Birendra's father, who introduced the partyless elected panchayat (council) system.

(See earlier story on page 8)

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War of nerves in Lithuania

MOSCOW (AP) — Some 2,000 Lithuanian citizens prevented hundreds of Soviet soldiers from entering the republic's main printing plant in Vilnius before dawn Sunday to reinforce outnumbered troops inside, residents said. Meanwhile in Rome, the Pope's envoy to the Soviet Union said in an interview published Sunday that the Vatican might mediate in the independence dispute if it was asked to do so. Pope John Paul II already has called for talks to resolve the dispute in Lithuania, which is overwhelmingly Catholic. The developments came at the end of Lithuania's fourth week of self-declared independence and a day after some 300,000 people rallied in Vilnius to press their independence demands on the Kremlin. Also Saturday in the neighbouring Baltic Republic of Latvia, radical members of the Communist Party stormed out of a party meeting after fellow delegates refused to declare the local party independent of Moscow. Hundreds of Soviet soldiers arrived at the Lithuanian printing plant about 5 a.m. (8300 GMT) Sunday in more than a dozen military vehicles, but were prevented from getting inside, according to Romanas Bogdanas, an adviser to Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis.

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Israel shells S-Lebanon villages

TYRE (AP) — Israeli troops and allied militiamen retaliated for a guerrilla assault Sunday by shelling villages in South Lebanon. Security sources said two people were killed and nine wounded in the attacks. Unidentified infiltrators ambushed eight militiamen of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) who were on food patrol along the Al-Man-Somarib road, inside the "security zone" Israel controls in South Lebanon. A security source speaking on condition of anonymity said one SLA militiaman was killed and two wounded in the brief afternoon clash. The source said the SLA and Israeli troops retaliated by bombarding the villages of Zotar Al Sharih and Zotar Al Gharibieh killing one person and wounding seven.

Four killed in S. African violence

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Four blacks were killed and seven injured in the latest round of faction fighting, police reported Sunday. In unrest reports for the previous 24 hours say that four blacks died in four separate incidents. Three of the deaths occurred in the southeastern province of Natal, site of a black power struggle that has claimed some 4,000 lives since 1986. The seven people injured included two policemen, African National Congress leader Walter Sisulu joined thousands of blacks at a funeral service Sunday for protesters fatally shot in a clash with police March 26 in Sebokeng, a township south of Johannesburg.

Greek conservatives take strong lead

ATHENS (R) — Greece's conservative party took a strong lead in initial results Sunday in the country's third national election in 10 months. With 6.7 per cent of the vote counted, the conservative New Democracy Party had 49.2 per cent, the Pasok Socialist Party 37.4 per cent and a communist-led alliance 8.4 per cent, the interior ministry said. Opinion polls have shown New Democracy well in the lead but short of an absolute majority in the 300-seat parliament, as it was in June and November elections. It was too early to say whether New Democracy would win an absolute majority this time.

Free Democrats admit defeat in Hungary

BUDAPEST (R) — The alliance of Free Democrats conceded defeat Sunday as early results showed a landslide towards the centre-right Hungarian Democratic Forum in Hungary's first free national elections since 1945. "It is clear that the Hungarian Democratic Forum is going to get the most seats," Miklos Haraszti, spokesman for the left-liberal alliance, said in a television interview after a second and decisive round of voting.

Ugandan cabinet minister arrested

KAMPALA (AP) — Uganda's minister of culture, youth and sports has been arrested on a charge of sedition, a presidential press secretary said Sunday. Moses Ali was detained Saturday after being summoned from his home to state house, said Hope Kivengere, the president's spokeswoman. She declined to provide further details.

Argentine minister in London for talks

LONDON (AP) — Foreign Minister Domingo Cavallo of Argentina arrived in London Sunday, the most senior representative of his government to visit Britain since the two countries fought a war over the Falkland Islands in 1982. Cavallo flew into Heathrow airport for talks with Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and a lunch with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and said he hoped the meetings would help improve relations. "We have now normal diplomatic relations between Britain and Argentina so we will go over all the bilateral questions," he told reporters.

Mubarak urges nuclear and chemical weapon-free Middle East

King calls for well-prepared Arab summit

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer with agency despatches

AMMAN — The present situation in the Arab World and the common threats to the Arab countries call for an Arab summit meeting for which ample preparations should be made, His Majesty King Hussein said in a statement in Amman.

"An Arab summit is needed to plan concerted Arab action vis-a-vis the common dangers that threaten the Arab nation," the King said in a statement to the Egyptian journalists accompanying President Hosni Mubarak, who made a brief stopover at Amman Saturday night on his way back home from a visit to Baghdad.

Mubarak and King Hussein reviewed Arab affairs and developments on the international scene within the framework of continued consultations and coordination among the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) leaders, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

"King Hussein reiterated Jordan's full support for Iraq," the current hostile campaign against Iraq, which I myself witnessed during my recent visit to Europe,

is totally unjustified because Iraq seeks just and honourable peace for all the Arab World and because Iraq continues to defend the Arab Order," the King said. "The Arabs should transcend all their differences and unify their ranks and make a correct assessment of the present situation so that they can constitute an effective force in word and deed so as to win world support for their endeavours to achieve peace and justice," the King said.

"We have to be true with ourselves and we have to ask ourselves about the weak points in our midst so that we can carry out our duty," the King added. He said: "The Arab masses are no doubt as concerned as their leaders are about the present and the future and for this reason we are striving to achieve coordination and integration among the Arab countries."

Mubarak's visit, he said, was another chance for discussing matters of concern to the Arab World and the ACC. Asked whether the United States was more serious at present in its peace efforts, the King said that Washington is supposed to be shouldering special responsibilities in the world and for the

establishment of justice and peace which is in the interest of all nations. "We hope that Washington will work in harmony with the requirements of peace and justice," he said. "I think the leaders of the Arab World should shoulder a more serious responsibility than at any time in the past and they have to realise that unless they end divisions and weaknesses the result will be a great loss for all because a weak Arab Nation will open the door wide for hostile forces to achieve their objectives at the expense of the Arab countries," the King said.

In reply to a question, the King said Jordan shoulders a grave responsibility while guarding the longest confrontation line with the Israeli enemy and therefore the Kingdom's participation in any peace process is essential. "I hope that all parties will understand that there can be no solution without Jordan, which is now playing its role in helping the Palestinians to achieve their rights and regain their homeland in Palestine."

He said that once the Palestine problem was resolved the whole

(Continued on page 5)

King receives Pakistani message

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein received at the Royal Court Sunday Wasim Sajjad, speaker of the Pakistani Senate who delivered a message to the King from the Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and reviewed bilateral relations and world affairs.

Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi and the Pakistani delegation attended the meeting. Sajjad, who met earlier with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and other officials, also conferred Sunday with Jamal Sarairoh, first deputy speaker of the Lower House of Parliament.

Sajjad paid tribute to His Majesty King Hussein's efforts for peace and for bolstering Jordanian-Pakistani relations. "Pakistan can understand Jordan's concern over the Soviet Jewish immigration in Palestine since this is a dangerous and an illegal move," the Pakistani official said.

"The international community ought to take serious and effective steps to put an end to this immigration which is detrimental to the Palestinian people in the occupied lands," Sajjad said.

Sarairoh spoke about the Palestinian issue, the Soviet Jewish immigration and the Iran-Iraq conflict in the Gulf and appealed to Pakistan and Turkey, the nearest Muslim countries in the area to use their good offices to bring about a lasting peace to the Gulf.

The Pakistani team left Amman later Sunday.

Consultations end on national charter panel

By Lamis Andoni and Ghadeer Taber Jordan Times Staff Reporters

AMMAN — Consultations to form a royal commission to draw up a national charter to regulate political life have almost concluded and the names of members are expected to be announced in the next two days, according to official sources.

"The commission will be announced any time starting from Monday (today)," an official source told the Jordan Times. It is expected that His Majesty King Hussein will meet with the panel shortly after its official announcement, according to the source.

In an interview with the Jordan Times in January, the King said he would put forward some ideas but would leave it to the panel to work out the charter.

The official source expected the commission to include between 54 and 57 members representing all shades of the political spectrum.

The official, who spoke to the Jordan Times on condition of anonymity, as well as other sources confirmed that the 21 people whose names were published by the Jordan Times Saturday would be included in the commission but said that government officials would not be

appointed to the panel. According to earlier information available to the Jordan Times, the King's special advisor Adnan Abu Odeh and Information Minister Ibrahim Izzeddin as well as the speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament were to be included in the commission.

Following are the 21 names confirmed by the official source Sunday: Ibrahim Bakr (lawyer); Laila Sharaf (Upper House member and former information minister); Hamad Farhan (Upper House member and a leading member of the Al Qawmiyyun nationalist movement in the 50s and 60s); Asma Khader (lawyer and human rights activist); Said Al Tal (former minister and university professor); Ali Abu Nuwar (former chief of staff of the Armed Forces and a leader of an opposition "free officers" movement in the 50s); Amin Shukry (former leading Baathist and now member of the Upper House of Parliament); Abdul Latif Arabiyat (Muslim Brotherhood deputy from Balqa); Yusuf Al Alham (Muslim Brotherhood deputy from Maan); Majed Khalifeh (Muslim Brotherhood deputy from Amman); Abdullah Alayeh (Muslim Brotherhood deputy from Tafila); Ismael Farhan (Muslim Brotherhood member and member of the Upper House); Mohammad Fares Tarawneh (Baathist deputy from Karak); Muna Shukry (pan-Arab nationalist writer); Samir Habashneh (pan-Arabist writer and agriculturalist); Tayseer Zibri

(general secretary of the JPDP); Issa Midanat (political bureau member of the Jordanian Communist Party and deputy from Karak); Theeb Marji (deputy from Irbid); Hamadeh Farach (writer); Akram Zuhair (Upper House member and historian); Aida Mutaq (political activist from Irbid) and Iyad Qattan (director of the Royal Cultural Centre and a writer).

In addition, the following personalities will also be in the committee, according to other sources:

Depuities Abdullah Ensour (independent), Jamal Khreish (independent), Saad Hail Shour (independent), Ahmad Quteib Al Azaidh (Muslim Brotherhood), Mohammad Abu Oleim (independent), Taher Al Masri (independent), Jamal Sarairoh (Muslim sympathiser) and Abdullah Zreikat (independent); professors Labib Samhawi, Sabhan Khellaf, Fawzi Gharrabeh, Subhi Al Qasbi, Adnan Al Bakht and Mohammad Khir Mamer; writers and journalists Mohammad Ahmad Awad, Abdullah Al Malki, Sultan Hartab and Mahmoud Sherif; Abdul Salam Al Majali (former minister and ex-president of the University of Jordan) and Fawaz Abu Tayeh (chief of protocol); Ali Suleimat (former minister and present mayor of Amman), Walid Sharr (representative of the Unionist Democratic Party), Hosni Aysah (a liberal columnist and member of the Upper House of Parliament), Abdul Rahim Omar (poet and president of the Jordan Writers' Association), Taher Hikmat (former minister and prominent lawyer) and Ibrahim Al-Joundi (a liberal columnist).

Jordan, Libya move towards reopening diplomatic missions

By Narmeen Murad Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A Jordanian delegation entrusted with finalising "administrative" preparations for the reopening of Jordan's embassy in Tripoli will arrive in the Libyan capital Tuesday while a similar Libyan delegation is expected in Amman this week, sources told the Jordan Times Sunday.

The Jordanian delegation, headed by Ambassador at-large Hisham Muhaissen and including the director of the department of finances at the ministry, "will work to facilitate administrative and financial procedures," an official source said.

The source termed this move as "a further step towards improved relations between Jordan and

Libya." Jordan broke diplomatic ties with Libya in 1984 after crowds of Libyan students stormed the Jordanian embassy in Tripoli and looted and burned the building. Several months later Libya closed its embassy in Jordan and assigned its affairs to the Syrian embassy in the Kingdom.

The two countries resumed relations in 1988 when Jordan unilaterally announced the resumption of diplomatic ties with Libya to facilitate the success of the Amman Arab summit after Arab mediation efforts. One of the conditions placed on the resumption of diplomatic ties by Jordan was that Libya undertake financial responsibility for the damage to the Jordanian embassy building in Tripoli.

The Foreign Ministry source told the Jordan Times Sunday that the embassy building in Libya "has been renovated and furnished at the expense of the Libyan government."

"The Jordanian delegation will receive the keys to the new embassy," the source said. "The Libyan delegation, which is supposed to arrive in Jordan this week, will also take charge of their embassy in Amman."

According to the senior official, Muhaissen will only head the preparatory delegation to reopen the Jordanian embassy "but another higher delegation will inaugurate the embassy later."

The name of the proposed ambassador was not immediately available but the Foreign Ministry source said "consultations are underway to find the right ambassador."

Hamas: PLO should abandon peace strategy

AMMAN (R) — Muslim fundamentalists waging war against Israel in the occupied territories say the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) should abandon the pursuit of peace with the Jewish state before it would agree to fall in line with mainstream Palestinians.

A spokesman for the Palestine National Council (PNC) said Sunday that Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, told Palestinian leaders in Amman that it would join the PNC only if it abandoned the peace strategy. Hardline Palestinian leaders, who agree with its political aims, had earlier called on Hamas to join the PLO-dominated unified leadership of the uprising in the occupied territories.

At its last session in Algiers in November 1988, the PNC declared an independent Palestinian state that would co-exist with Israel.

Hamas violently opposes any accommodation with Israel and PLO leader Yasser Arafat's two-stage proposal. The movement said in a memorandum to the Amman meeting, called to discuss how to revise membership of the 451-strong PNC, that it wanted two-fifths of the seats to reflect what it saw as its strength in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, the official added.

The fundamentalists favoured cutting the size of the PNC to save money, said the official, who asked not to be named.

Twenty Palestinian leaders from main PLO factions as well as independents met for a second day to discuss possible changes to the PNC. The committee met previously in Tunis last month.

One PNC official said the Hamas memorandum would be referred to the PLO Executive Committee and the PNC secretary.

"Our goal is to let them (Hamas) participate in the new PNC since they are one of the

'Welcome/protest' action to greet U.S. Senate delegation

By Marianne M. Shahin Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In an attempt to reaffirm the Arab rejection of a resolution by the U.S. Senate accepting Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, the Amman chapter of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) will stage what it describes as a "welcome/protest" action during the (expected) visit of a U.S. Senate delegation later this week.

The six-member U.S. Senate delegation, led by Republican leader Robert Dole of Kansas, arrived in Syria Sunday. The delegation, scheduled to arrive here Wednesday after a visit to Egypt, was expected to meet with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharara.

According to a press release issued by the ADC in Amman, the protest action, in which popular organisations in Jordan are expected to take part, will involve

a gathering of about 100 people carrying banners. A memorandum outlining the Arab position on Jerusalem and condemnation of the Senate resolution, which was adopted last month by 84 voice votes in the Senate, will be handed over to Dole, the ADC said.

Although consultations are still under way, various organisations such as the professional associations and women's groups as well as prominent Palestinians and representatives of Palestinians expelled from the occupied Arab lands are also expected to participate in the "protest action."

"The protest action will involve a gathering of about 100 people holding placards, banners and a memorandum outlining the Arab position on Jerusalem and the inadmissibility of any unilateral position in the Holy City," the ADC statement said.

The U.S. Senate resolution came in contradiction to the announced policy of the Bush administration and the ADC

statement said that it supports "the courageous position adopted by President George Bush on Jerusalem, confirming that it is part of territories occupied in 1967."

Prominent Jordanian journalist Tareq Masarweb called on Jordanian newspapers to boycott the visit by the U.S. senators in protest of the resolution.

"One of the six senators was one of the instigators of the whole resolution on Jerusalem," Masarweb wrote in Al Ra'i. "Howard Metzenbaum, a Democrat from Ohio, is one of the biggest Zionists in the Senate; why should we welcome him?" Masarweb asked.

Commenting on the columnist's call, the head of the Jordan Press Association, Hashem Khreishat, said the association would coordinate its action with the General Union of Professional Associations.

Mamdouh Abbadi, head of the general union, said protest action

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Likud senses defeat as bargaining continues

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's rightist Likud Party virtually conceded defeat to dovish Labour Party leader Shimon Peres Sunday as Yitzhak Shamir presided over what may have been his final cabinet meeting as prime minister.

Both parties, hoping to form the next government, made fresh efforts to lure defectors despite a rally Saturday night in which 150,000 Israelis angered by such tactics urged a change in the electoral system.

Likud cabinet ministers vowed to try to block the Peres bid, but betrayed a sense of defeat by criticising the coalition likely to emerge from the special parliamentary session Wednesday.

"It's the first time in Israeli history that a switch by a parliament member from one party to a rival party will cause a change in leadership," Transport Minister Moshe Katsav told reporters after the cabinet meeting.

Likud ministers said they would try to win back Avraham Sharir, a former Likud justice and tourism minister who announced his support for Labour, breaking a 60-60 deadlock in the 120-seat parliament.

Peres, whose narrow coalition would depend on an ultra-religious Jewish party, three allied leftist parties and far-left Arab parliamentarians, wants to lead Israel into its first peace talks with Palestinians.

Katsav added: "It's the first time that (Palestinian leader) Yasser Arafat has said... he supports Shimon Peres to head the government."

Ariel Sharon, a Likud hardliner who quit the cabinet because he feared Shamir's timid steps toward the U.S.-proposed talks in Cairo would lead to contact with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), told reporters:

"It is impossible to lead a hand

to a government that is essentially established with the help of Arafat and his gang of murderers... there is no legitimacy to a government established by PLO votes."

Arafat said in Rome Friday that he had held secret contacts with coveys sent by Shamir and former Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Labour.

The PLO leader also told French Radio that peace efforts could advance if Peres had a solid majority.

The Likud-Labour coalition fell last month over Shamir's refusal to accept the talks, which were to advance his own proposal for Palestinian elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Demonstrators in Tel Aviv Saturday demanded an end to Israel's proportional representation system, which leaves big parties dependent on support by

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OIC seeks big power help against Soviet Jewish immigration

RABAT (Agencies) — The Organisation of Islamic Conference's (OIC) Jerusalem Committee called early Sunday on the United States, the Soviet Union and the European Community (EC) to help prevent the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

The committee, ending a two-day extraordinary meeting, also condemned the U.S. Senate resolution naming Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. It asked the Senate to reconsider its decision.

Leading 17 recommendations adopted by the committee was a call to the Soviet Union to forbid the "massive immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel. It is a move that puts 'in danger the peace process in the region,' the committee said in a final statement, and constitutes an "encouragement" for Israel "to persist in its policy of expansion, colonialism and aggression."

The committee, headed by King Hassan of Morocco, asked the United States to lift restrictions on the immigration of Soviet Jews and stop aid to Israel and private fund-raising supporting projects designed to increase the Israeli population.

It exhorted the 12 member-nations of the EC to allow Soviet Jews to immigrate and to open transfer centres allowing refugees to choose their final destination.

Thirteen Arab states and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) were represented at the closed-door meeting, called to examine the question of a new

wave of immigration of Jews to Israel, the U.S. Senate resolution and the situation in the Israeli-occupied territories. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat represented his organisation.

Hassan, president of the committee, said at the opening session that he was convinced those who designate Jerusalem as the capital of Israel do so out of ignorance. He was referring to the recent U.S. Senate resolution considering Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state — a move "energetically condemned" in the committee's final communique. It said the resolution "ignores Arab rights and offends the feelings of the entire Islamic World."

The committee also decided to send a delegation to visit the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to explain "the dimensions and dangers" of the settlement of Soviet Jews in the Israeli-occupied territories. It called on the Security Council to set up a control committee to ensure against the settlement of Soviet Jews in the occupied territories, "Jerusalem and the Golan Heights."

The committee quoted Arafat as saying three million Jews from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and Ethiopia were expected to arrive in Israel, doubling its population.

It said he told the meeting Israel planned to create new settlements on the occupied territories and expand its frontiers.

Arab panel welcomes Geagea's position

RABAT (Agencies) — Arab League foreign ministers trying to bring peace to Lebanon welcomed Sunday a decision by Christian militia chief Samir Geagea to recognise Lebanon's President Elias Hrawi.

"The committee expresses its satisfaction over the beginning of the process of the establishment of the authority of the Lebanese state in east Beirut following the positive position of Samir Geagea," they said in a statement.

The foreign ministers of Algeria, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia — three countries charged by the Arab League with trying to end 15 years of war in Lebanon — also expressed their deep concern over what they called continuing artificial obstacles to peace.

Troops under rebel General Michel Aoun, who refuses to accept a peace accord brokered by the three countries, have been battling Geagea's Lebanese Forces militia for more than two months in the Christian enclave.

Heavy fighting erupted Thursday and Friday after Geagea called on Hrawi to send his troops to restore order in east Beirut and said he now accepted the peace plan, adopted by the Lebanese parliament in Taif, Saudi Arabia, last year.

The statement said the three-man committee had prepared a detailed report on the situation for their respective heads of state.

Palestinian group threatens to embarrass Belgian government

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Palestinian hostage-takers called Belgium's justice minister a liar Sunday and said they could prove he broke promises made in negotiations over the fate of their captives.

Fatch Revolutionary Council (FRC), the group led by Abu Nidal, says it will free three European hostages soon but keep four Belgians because the government in Brussels failed to honour pledges.

Belgian Justice Minister Melchior Wathelet said on television Saturday "we cannot keep any promises that have not been made."

FRC spokesman Walid Khaled replied in a statement issued in Beirut that the minister's statement was untrue.

"I ask Mr. Melchior Wathelet to correct his statement. Otherwise I will be forced to publish the minutes of negotiations with Belgian government officials and delegates, including him."

Earlier statements by the FRC — which the U.S. government calls the world's most dangerous

terrorist group — have contrasted Belgium's approach to the fate of the hostages with that of France.

The group said Brussels had broken promises, "especially that of curbing the activity of the Israeli Mossad secret service in Belgium."

Palestinian sources said however that in return for hostages the FRC wanted Belgium to free a guerrilla sentenced to life imprisonment 10 years ago for attacking a synagogue.

FRC said Sunday that plans to free at least three French and Belgian hostages were proceeding.

The statement delivered to a Western press agency quoted Khaled as saying that the release of Mrs. Jacqueline Valente, her boyfriend Fernand Hontekins

and their daughter Sophie born in captivity was "proceeding accord-

ing to plan."

"We shall announce the date and place of their release in due time," it said.

The group first announced Friday that three of the eight hostages it holds would be released in response to a plea by Libyan leader Col. Muammar Qaddafi.

On Thursday the Belgian government said in a statement that it was pleased with Qaddafi's call for the release of all hostages.

But the attack on the minister suggested the other Belgian hostages seized by the group off a boat with Ms. Valente and her Belgian boyfriend would not be freed.

The Friday statement had attacked the Belgian government for not making a serious effort to free the hostages, saying only France and Qaddafi had taken the initiative on the issue.

But it warned the Belgian government to fulfill unspecified pledges to "curb Zionist activities against the revolution of our people."

Ahu Nidal announced on Nov.

8, 1987 that it had seized a group of hostages from the French yacht Silco off the Gaza Strip and accused them of collaborating with Israel's Mossad intelligence agency. Friends said the group was on a holiday cruise.

The group acknowledged holding Valente, 32, two daughters born in captivity and five Belgians.

The Belgians are Emmanuel Hontekins, in his 40s, his wife Godlieve Kets, his son Laurent and daughter Valerie, both teenagers, and Fernando, also in his 40s.

Two other daughters of Ms. Valente were freed after Libyan intervention on Dec. 29, 1988. Daughter Marie-Laure was 6 at the time and Valerie was 5. They were returned to their father Pascal Bettelle, divorced from Valente.

The two girls surfaced in Libya, where the others are also believed held. Abu Nidal is backed by Libya and is said to live in the capital, Tripoli.

Israel rejects Soviet offer of direct flights

By Sami Aboudi
Reuters

TEL AVIV — Many Palestinian leaders say Israeli Prime Minister-designate Shimon Peres can push stalled Arab-Israeli peace efforts forward if he succeeds in forming a government this week.

Arabs in the occupied territories, and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), voice general distrust of Israeli leaders' peace intentions but say the Labour Party is a more likely negotiating partner than the right-wing Likud.

"A new government led by Peres would be a serious first step towards promoting peace," said Sari Nusseibeh, a leading Palestinian nationalist in the West Bank.

Nusseibeh says he believes proposed Palestinian-Israeli peace talks in Cairo could take place weeks after the establishment of a government led by Labour.

Peres last month toppled a coalition government led by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir over the right-wing premier's refusal to endorse U.S. proposals for the unprecedented talks.

Labour leaders say Peres now enjoys the support of at least 61

TEL AVIV (AP) — A senior official said Sunday that Israel could not accept a Soviet offer to allow direct flights to Israel for Jewish immigrants in exchange for a promise not to settle them in the occupied territories and East Jerusalem.

Avi Pazner, spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, said: "They go where they want to go. We cannot interfere with that."

Pazner was responding to a proposal made last week in Washington by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. The Soviet official said direct flights could be started if his country received assurances that no Soviet Jewish immigrants would settle on occupied land, including East Jerusalem.

Israel wants direct flights for Soviet Jews in order to expedite their immigration to Israel. The immigrants now arrive through European transit points.

The future of East Jerusalem and the occupied territories is the central issue in efforts to reach a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir raised an international storm in January when he suggested Israel needed a "big Israel" to absorb the hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews expected to immigrate in the next few years.

Shamir later said that Israel was not pushing Soviet immigrants to settle in the occupied territories, but would allow them to settle where they wished.

East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were occupied in the 1967 Middle East war. East Jerusalem is now home to 120,000 Jews and 140,000 Palestinians. About 75,000 Jewish settlers and 1.7 million Palestinians live in the West Bank and Gaza.

The United States has repeatedly described Israeli settlements in the occupied territories as an obstacle to peace and doesn't recognise Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem.

Soviet immigrant leader Nathan Sharansky also rejected Shevardnadze's proposal, saying it would violate the immigrants' freedom of choice. "How could you put this condition in a democratic country?" Sharansky said.

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek called the proposal "unreasonable" and said, "I think it's only for us to decide where people should go."

He said 1,200 recent Soviet immigrants had settled in Jerusalem, but he didn't know how many of them were living in the Arab parts of the city.

Palestinians see opportunity for peace if Israelis ready

deputies, enough to give him a parliamentary majority when he submits his government for approval Wednesday.

For the first time in the 42-year Arab-Israeli conflict, many Palestinian and Israeli leaders appear close to a common view of the need to negotiate a peace settlement.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Unlike any previous government, a Peres-led cabinet would include those who support trading land for peace and some form of negotiation with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), officially outlawed by Israel as "a terror organisation."

Peres, in a scathing attack on Likud leaders a week before the coalition collapsed, said it was unrealistic to think the PLO could be excluded from peace efforts.

The new government is likely to include Ezer Weizman, Moshe Shaleh and Yossi Beilin, who openly advocate talks with the PLO.

Palestinians say that their 28-month revolt against Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has brought down many barriers that separated

Palestinians and Israelis for decades.

They say Israelis now concede the need to negotiate with Palestinians, instead of Jordan, as Labour previously advocated.

Strengthened by the uprising, Palestinian leaders feel enough confidence to voice support for Peres in his bid to form a new government next week.

In an unprecedented step PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat said Thursday he had asked seven Arab members of the Israeli parliament to support Peres's bid to secure a parliamentary majority for his government.

"I have asked Arab deputies present in the Knesset (parliament) to vote for Peres and it will be the first time this happens," Arafat told Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti during a visit to Rome.

Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories, though more cautious, have also courted the Labour Party.

"If Israelis change their attitudes (towards Palestinians) they will find that for every step they take there will be a Palestinian one," Faisal Al Hussein, one of the most senior pro-PLO figures in the occupied territories, told Israelis two weeks ago.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEFS

Bahrain voices support for Iraq

BAHRAIN (R) — Bahrain said Sunday that Iraq had the right to defend itself with whatever weapons it had at its disposal. "Bahrain reiterates its backing and support for Iraq's legitimate and full right to defend its land and installations with any possible resources that preserve its security and independence," a statement carried by the Gulf News Agency said. "This media campaign against Iraq aims at finding excuses for an aggression against it, to halt its achievements and to stop current efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Palestinian problem," the agency said. The statement, carried after Bahrain's weekly cabinet meeting, urged Arab states to unite against "dangers facing them." Saddam Hussein said Saturday that Arab states had as much right as Israel to possess nuclear and chemical weapons.

Qatar frees 57 prisoners

DOHA (AP) — The Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani, Sunday ordered the release of 57 prisoners to mark the holy month of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr celebrations, the official Qatar News Agency reported. Earlier in the month, 364 prisoners were released in the United Arab Emirates. The releases were ordered by the rulers of the separate emirates federated in the UAE. In the leading emirate of Abu Dhabi, the ruler Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayyan, who is also president of the UAE, also underwrote financial claims for the 150 he ordered released.

24 killed in air raid in Massawa

NAIROBI (R) — At least 24 civilians were killed and 75 wounded Saturday as Ethiopian Air Force jets bombed the rebel-held Red Sea port of Massawa, rebel radio monitored in Nairobi reported Sunday. The Voice of the Broad Masses of Eritrea said four Soviet-made MIG jets repeatedly attacked a densely populated area of Massawa. Earlier, the Eritrean

People's Liberation Front (EPLF) said in a telex message to Reuters in Nairobi that 12 civilians died and 45 were injured in another day of air raids Friday, when bombs were dropped on the commercial centre of the town. Over the past week, the radio said, successive Ethiopian air raids have killed a total of 71 people. Massawa was captured by the EPLF after heavy fighting in February. Eritrea, bordering the Red Sea in northern Ethiopia, is the centre of Africa's longest-running civil war, now in its 28th year.

Turkey's ruling party to hold congress

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's ruling Motherland Party, facing deep internal rifts and slumping public support, said Sunday it would hold an early congress expected to produce a fierce fight for the party leadership. Members of a key committee of the centre-right party said in a statement that a party congress, which had been due in June 1991, would instead be held as soon as possible. "Whichever is the earliest possible date, I specially want the congress to be held then," Prime Minister and party leader Yildirim Akbulut told reporters after the committee ended a meeting early Sunday.

Iran to continue anti-U.S. campaign

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's Parliamentary Speaker Mahdi Karrubi said Sunday Tehran would continue campaigning against the United States, 10 years after relations with Washington were severed. The Iranian News Agency (IRNA) quoted Karrubi as telling parliament on the anniversary of the break in relations that Iran would continue, "its determined campaign against the world-devourer, the United States." He told an open session of parliament that Iran was "pleased to have rid itself of ties with the U.S. and will firmly continue this policy." IRNA, monitored in Nicosia, quoted Karrubi as saying Washington had not stopped its conspiracies against Iran.

Northern Africa needs urgent aid, experts say

NEW HAVEN, Connecticut (AP) — Relief experts called Saturday for a concerted international aid effort to break the cycle of war and social upheaval in struggling African nations.

Officials with international programmes or agencies assisting refugees also told a symposium at Yale University that relief work must provide ways for the millions of people displaced by civil strife, persecution or natural disasters to help themselves.

Catherine O'Neill, who specialises in problems facing women for the International Rescue Committee, said tragic situations that refugees face are made worse because they often lead to "cycles of dependency."

As an example, she cited the plight of Afghan refugees who have been in Pakistan for 10 years while rebels waged a bloody campaign to overthrow the Kabul government.

"The hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars spent by international agencies and organisations during that 10-year period were not directed towards women's needs," she said.

"Everyone was content to sit back and let an entire generation of women go uneducated."

She said the neglect also left children uneducated, raising the prospect of a cycle that puts these people in a society that needs widespread reconstruction but gives them little to build upon.

"When we talk to these women and ask them what they want, they say, 'We want to help shape the destiny of our own people.' ... The major donor agencies, it had not occurred to them that this might be a possibility."

Donald Krumm, a U.S. State Department adviser on refugee assistance, opened a discussion on the Horn of Africa with a terse appraisal.

"It's a mess," said Donald Krumm, who worked on the problem of refugee flows in Malawi and Sudan in 1985 and 1986. He warned it could worsen if relief workers and agency officials fail to keep the region's problems in the international spotlight.

He said the plight of North Africans gained attention when television images of starving

Ethiopians shocked the world in the mid-1980s, but that the crisis is now overshadowed by political changes sweeping other regions.

"There's no mistake about it. Money is going to Eastern Europe to help, food is going to Eastern Europe to help and that food comes from somewhere. It comes from a pot, and that can mean less for situations like the Horn of Africa," Krumm said.

The Sudanese ambassador to the United States stressed that assistance for refugees in his nation "must be taken from the position of relief to increased self-reliance."

"The citizens of Sudan have taken it upon themselves to accommodate the refugees who flood the region from other countries in the region," Abdallah Ahmad Abdullah said.

He said aid and services provided by the U.N. High Commission for Refugees "is minimal."

"Burden-sharing should be considered, and the international community should look into this so it can do more," Abdullah said.

Dawit Wolde-Giorgis, who

headed the Ethiopian commission that organised relief efforts from 1982-86, said the world now seems to be ignoring the Horn of Africa. The region made up of four nations — Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and Djibouti — has an estimated 2 million refugees.

According to U.N. estimates, there are 600,000 Ethiopian refugees in Sudan; 325,000 Somali and 375,000 Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia; 600,000 Ethiopian refugees in Somalia, and 1,500 Ethiopians and 30,000 Somalis in Djibouti.

There are also large populations of people displaced within their home countries by insurgencies.

Wolde-Giorgis appealed for people to pressure their governments.

"Other people in the world suffer as much as the people in the Horn of Africa," he said. "In spite of the suffering caused by internal conflict, by hunger, by deprivation, by displacement, it has not been able to attract the kind of attention the situation demands from the West and from America."

Turkish troops kill 9 Kurdish rebels in clash

ANKARA (R) — Troops killed nine members of a rebel Kurdish group in southeast Turkey near the Iraqi frontier in a 20-hour clash, an official said Sunday.

One member of the outlawed Marxist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) was captured in the fighting near Oymakçaya village in Hakkari, 25 kilometres north of the border, the Anatolian News Agency quoted deputy regional Governor Nafiz Kayral as saying.

Kayral expected the death toll to rise as the gunbattle was still raging more than 20 hours after it started Saturday. He did not mention any casualties among the troops.

A relentless fight between the independence-seeking PKK and government forces in the south-east has killed at least 77 people since March this year, compared to only 16 in the first three months of 1989.

More than 2,000 people, including civilians, have been killed since mid-1984 when the PKK launched its violent campaign. The Turkish cabinet is due to meet under President Turgut Ozal Monday to decide on new measures to quell the insurgency in line with new policy which Ozal outlined as "more compassion" for the people but a "merciless struggle" against the rebels.

Most of Turkey's estimated 10 million Kurdish-speakers live in the underdeveloped area near Iran, Iraq and Syria.

Kuwait reiterates pledge to restore parliament

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah has reiterated a pledge to restore parliament dissolved in 1986.

"The government is serious about bringing back parliamentary life," he told reporters late Saturday after meeting a group of activists.

"There is no alternative to the return of the assembly (parliament)... but the return of parliamentary life will come under rules to prevent repetition of what happened in the past."

The government has said most people favour the return to a parliamentary system but under new rules that stop previous practices it saw as divisive.

The Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, dissolved parliament at the height of the Iran-Iraq war, citing a foreign conspiracy to destroy his country.

Professional associations, students and trade unionists backing a pro-democracy movement which began last year have urged Sheikh Jaber not to amend the constitution before a new parliament is elected.

Afghan elections shelved despite some rebel claims

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Fighting among the U.S.-backed Afghan rebels has derailed tentative plans to hold elections in guerrilla-controlled areas of Afghanistan, sources said Saturday.

"It's dead, destroyed purpose," said Azim Nasseer-Zia, whose moderate rebel group authored the election plan. Nasseer-Zia said his party leader, Ahmad Gailani, "will keep fighting for elections, like he has for the last 11 years. But it's impossible."

However, a spokesman for weak and deeply divided guerrilla government-in-exile said elections haven't been abandoned.

"We will try our best," said Najibullah Lefrey, the information minister in the "interim government," which has been criticised as narrow and unrepresentative by Afghans and Western diplomats in Pakistan.

About two months ago, the Muslim insurgents based in Pakistan unveiled an elaborate plan to elect a Loya Jirga, or traditional grand council. The Loya Jirga is a centuries-old Afghan tradition of selecting a government.

Ten representatives from each of Afghanistan's 216 guerrilla-held subdistricts were to attend to choose a leader, who in turn would name his government.

Another guerrilla source, who asked not to be identified, said the plans were drawn up in response to those demanding a political solution to Afghanistan's bloody 12-year war.

But the election plan was not supported by Iranian-based rebels or by renegade rebel leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, considered one of the strongest of the fractured rebel groups.

Most of the guerrilla fighters living in Iran belong to the Shi'ite sect of Islam practiced by most Iranians. It is Afghanistan's largest minority, representing about 15 per cent of the population. Most Afghans belong to the Sunni sect of Islam, like most Pakistanis.

"We're trying everything, but the Iranian-based guys are not budging," Nasseer-Zia said.

They differ on whether women should be allowed to vote and want proportional representation and recognition as a minority representing 30 per cent of the population, he said.

Hekmatyar, leader of the fundamentalist Hezb-i-Islami, has gradually distanced himself from the other guerrilla leaders headquartered in Pakistan until finally last week he had severed all ties.

Nasseer-Zia charged that the fundamentalist leaders were not interested in a political solution.

"They will lose everything they have, these perks. They are living like emperors," he said, referring to the sprawling colonial-style homes of the seven major guerrilla leaders living in Pakistan's border city of Peshawar.

Muslim insurgents, backed by the United States, Pakistan and some Arab states, have been fighting for 12 years to oust the Kabul government.

Meanwhile, rebels claimed Saturday that their phony mass surrender Friday has dealt a major blow to Afghan president Najibullah's propaganda war against the insurgency.

Some 2,000 guerrillas opened fire Friday as they and some 8,000 unarmed rebels staged a mass surrender to the Afghan government in a ceremony on the Herat plains in northern Afghanistan.

State-run radio and rebels said more than a dozen military officials and civilians were killed, including two guerrillas.

Lefrey, a member of the Jamiat-i-Islami faction, said it destroyed Najibullah's claims that tens of thousands of rebel fighters were changing sides and embracing his Soviet-backed government.

But Najibullah rejected the charge in a nationwide address Saturday over Radio Kabul.

"A few thousand opposition lay down their arms... But two known terrorists trying to disrupt our national reconciliation have stained their hands with the blood of our people," said Najibullah.

Najibullah regularly refers to U.S.-backed rebels as the armed opposition.

Meanwhile, the broadcast, monitored in Islamabad, said Herat's provincial governor, Fazle Haq Khaliq Yar, was hospitalised in Kabul with gunshot wounds.

He was shot while embracing rebel fighters masquerading as new converts to Najibullah's three-year-old national reconciliation policy.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME ONE	15:30	15:45	15:55	16:05	16:15	16:25	16:35	16:45	16:55	17:05	17:15	17:25	17:35	17:45	17:55	18:05	18:15	18:25	18:35	18:45	18:55	19:05	19:15	19:25	19:35	19:45	19:55	20:05	20:15	20:25	20:35	20:45	20:55	21:05	21:15	21:25	21:35	21:45	21:55	22:05	22:15	22:25	22:35	22:45	22:55	23:05	23:15	23:25	23:35	23:45	23:55	24:05	24:15	24:25	24:35	24:45	24:55	25:05	25:15	25:25	25:35	25:45	25:55	26:05	26:15	26:25	26:35	26:45	26:55	27:05	27:15	27:25	27:35	27:45	27:55	28:05	28:15	28:25	28:35	28:45	28:55	29:05	29:15	29:25	29:35	29:45	29:55	30:05	30:15	30:25	30:35	30:45	30:55	31:05	31:15	31:25	31:35	31:45	31:55	32:05	32:15	32:25	32:35	32:45	32:55	33:05	33:15	33:25	33:35	33:45	33:55	34:05	34:15	34:25	34:35	34:45	34:55	35:05	35:15	35:25	35:35	35:45	35:55	36:05	36:15	36:25	36:35	36:45	36:55	37:05	37:15	37:25	37:35	37:45	37:55	38:05	38:15	38:25	38:35	38:45	38:55	39:05	39:15	39:25	39:35	39:45	39:55	40:05	40:15	40:25	40:35	40:45	40:55	41:05	41:15	41:25	41:35	41:45	41:55	42:05	42:15	42:25	42:35	42:45	42:55	43:05	43:15	43:25	43:35	43:45	43:55	44:05	44:15	44:25	44:35	44:45	44:55	45:05	45:15	45:25	45:35	45:45	45:55	46:05	46:15	46:25	46:35	46:45	46:55	47:05	47:15	47:25	47:35	47:45	47:55	48:05	48:15	48:25	48:35	48:45	48:55	49:05	49:15	49:25	49:35	49:45	49:55	50:05	50:15	50:25	50:35	50:45	50:55	51:05	51:15	51:25	51:35	51:45	51:55	52:05	52:15	52:25	52:35	52:45	52:55	53:05	53:15	53:25	53:35	53:45	53:55	54:05	54:15	54:25	54:35	54:45	54:55	55:05	55:15	55:25	55:35	55:45	55:55	56:05	56:15	56:25	56:35	56:45	56:55	57:05	57:15	57:25	57:35	
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EMBOYS PRESENT CREDENTIALS: Three newly appointed ambassadors to Jordan Sunday presented their credentials to His Majesty King Hussein at separate ceremonies held at the Royal Court and attended by senior officials. The ambassadors are (from left to right in photo above) Stefanovitch Griadonov of the Soviet

Union, Graciela Dela Lama of Mexico and Jesus Barreiro of Cuba. The Mexican and Cuban ambassadors are non-resident in Jordan. The ceremonies were attended by Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zaid Ben Shaker, King's Hussein's political advisor Adnan Abu Odeh, Chief Chamberlain Prince Raed Ben Zaid and Acting Minister

of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Information Ibrahim Izzeddin. Izzeddin earlier received a copy of the credentials of the Mexican and Cuban ambassadors to Jordan at separate meetings held in his office at the Foreign Ministry.

Jardaneh: Exports up, imports down

AMMAN (J.T.) — Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh said Sunday that Jordan's exports had increased by 12 per cent, exceeding the target of six per cent set under the Kingdom's economic adjustment programme.

In an interview with Jordan Television, Jardaneh also said Jordan's imports had decreased by 12 per cent against four per cent targeted in the programme.

Jardaneh statements followed five days of meeting with officials from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The minister pointed out that a joint evaluation carried out by the ministry and the IMF team had found that the deficit in Jordan's balance of trade had dropped from JD 1,700 million to JD 1,150 million and that the budget deficit had dropped from 24 per cent of the gross national product to 16 per cent.

He noted that Jordan had been able to build its foreign currency reserve and to increase it by \$300 million, enabling the Central Bank to stabilise the dinar's exchange rate.

Jardaneh said Jordan would achieve an economic growth of 2.5 per cent during the year 1990, helping to create new job opportunities. Jardaneh expected further improvement in the balance of trade, increasing exports and a



Basel Jardaneh

further drop in the budget deficit. He also expected an increase of approximately \$150 million in the foreign currency reserve. Jardaneh stressed that the year 1991 will be better than 1990 because of the improvements on the basis of the national economy.

"Such improvements will encourage investors to embark on investment projects in Jordan to benefit from the incentives provided by Jordan," he noted. The minister said Jordan could get \$325 million in loans through the World Bank, thus contributing to increasing foreign currency reserves and helping address the balance of payments deficit.

The minister expected a drop in the prices of consumer goods. The price rise during this year will not exceed 10 per cent, compared with 25 per cent last year, he said. However, he expected a further price decrease during the year 1991.

Amman Shari'a court studies apostasy case

AMMAN (Petra) — The Sharia court is looking into a case filed against the 71 year old Taha Mohammad Saleh Al Quzuq, for charges of apostasy and believing in the prophethood of Merza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Kadian movement.

Taha claimed that he was the leader of the Jordanian branch of the Kadian movement, which believes in the prophethood of Ghulam and that Ghulam came after Prophet Mohammad, contrary to Islam which said that Mohammad was the last prophet and the last of God's messengers.

The court Sunday discussed the case in details and decided, after receiving confirmed reports that Taha had announced his repent-

ance to God, to postpone the hearings till next Sunday.

Quzuq's apostasy was declared by the Sharia court in March when an Arabic daily issued abroad published an interview with him on March 16, 1990.

In the interview Taha claimed that he was the leader of the Kadian movement in Jordan and announced that Kadian is one of the monotheistic faiths.

Taha, born in 1919, had embraced the so-called Kadian religion since 1928.

The court will call Taha's supporters to know their position regarding this so-called religion, to decide whether to declare them apostates or not.

Protest to greet senators

(Continued from page 1) during the visit to the senators was under consideration. He did not elaborate.

Meanwhile, members of the Lower House of Parliament were consulting with each other, to decide on what action to take. "We should meet with the senators and enlighten them on the reality of life in the region and make clear to them how ridiculous and dangerous that Jerusalem resolution was," said one member of the Lower House's Foreign Affairs Committee.

Another member of the Lower House said: "Those senators who had anything to do with the Jerusalem resolution should be banned from entering all Arab countries. The resolution was a declaration of war and those who voted in its favour are enemies of the Arab Nation and are not welcome here."

A decision is expected to be taken within 48 hours if any collective protest action by members of the Lower House will be taken, deputies said.

Upon his arrival in Damascus Sunday, Sen. Dole said the

delegation was not carrying any fresh peace initiative for the Middle East.

The senators accompanying Dole include Republicans Alan Simpson (Wyoming), James McClure (Idaho), Charles Grassley (Iowa), and Frank Murkowski (Alaska) and Democrat Howard Metzenbaum from Ohio.

Hamas

(Continued from page 1) factions struggling against the Israeli occupation," he said.

Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, urged Hamas Saturday to join the PLO-backed underground leadership of the uprising.

On several occasions Hamas has called for strikes and other protest actions which clashed with those organised by the uprising's unified command.

In a statement released Sunday, George Habash, of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, said Hamas should join the mainstream opposition movement.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Society to help poor patients

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein Sunday accepted to serve as the honorary president of the Friends of the Patients Society. The society which has recently been established to provide aid to the poor patients, is chaired by Sharifa Thurayya Rakan Nasser.

Arar returns from IPU meetings

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Speaker Suleiman Arar Sunday returned home after taking part in the 83rd Inter-Parliamentary Union's session, which was concluded in Nicosia Saturday. Arar was received upon arrival by the First Deputy Speaker of the Lower House Jamal Al Saraireh and a number of Lower House deputies.

Minister of energy visits centre

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Thabet Al Taher Sunday visited the Energy and Electricity Information and Advisory Centre, where he was briefed by its director about the services it provides to citizens in areas of thermal insulation, solar heaters, illumination, electricity, cooling and heating.

Youth prepare for celebrations

AMMAN (Petra) — Ministry of Youth called on youth departments and youth centres throughout the country to pay special care to environment and to take part in the celebrations to be held on the Arab environment day, set for April 24.

Committee to try to solve Taffieh problems

TAFIEH (Petra) — A special committee, entrusted with addressing the drought and unemployment problems in Taffieh governorate Sunday discussed the projects to be carried out in the governorate to alleviate the effects of drought and absorb the largest number of unemployed citizens in suitable jobs. The committee stressed the need to direct special attention to service-oriented projects, saying that such projects should be given priority. The committee also stressed the need for setting up a special office at Taffieh Financial Department to receive citizens wishing to work in the projects.

Writers slam Senate decision

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Writers Federation Sunday denounced the U.S. Senate decision, considering Jerusalem the capital of Israel. In a cable to the U.S. Senate speaker the federation said the decision contravenes with the international law and norms, and is a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and its resolutions on the Palestinian problem and the issue of Jerusalem in particular. It also said that the decision by the U.S. Senate constitutes a flagrant violation of the human rights declaration and constitutes a breach of the rights of Arabs and Muslims in their holy shrine.

FAO gives money for agriculture

AMMAN (J.T.) — Secretary General of the Regional Association for the Agricultural Credit Corporations in the Near East and North Africa Mahmoud Al Hiyari Sunday said the association received Saturday a cash contribution of \$23,000 from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Hiyari said the amount will be used to finance the association's programmes, which aim at developing the marketing of agricultural products and encouraging exchange of expertise.

Chinese delegation arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — A three-man Chinese delegation, comprising director of Chinese Civil Defence Department, director of the Public Affairs Department and director of Public Relations at the Chinese National Police Department, arrives here Monday on a working visit to Jordan. The delegation will visit a number of police units and the Civil Defence Department.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition entitled "The Productive Families" displaying embroideries, ceramics, woolen clothes and foodstuffs at Al Qadisiyya Community College.
- ★ The Islamic book exhibition which includes books on Islam, literature, psychology, sociology, education, philosophy, law and history at Yarmouk University.
- ★ Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Khalil Al Kofahi at the Yarmouk University.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Mathématiques en Méditerranée" at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Comprehensive book exhibition at Ajloun girls school.

THEATRE

- ★ Arabic children's play entitled "Tales from My Grandmother's Chest" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 10:00 a.m.

Loans for agriculture mismanaged — minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Agriculture Suleiman Arabiyat admitted in a statement published Sunday that there had been mismanagement in the distribution of loans to farmers, some of whom received loans totalling JD 300,000.

"We are trying to unify the sources of credit for farmers so as to avoid dual services and to control the debt problem," Arabiyat said in a statement published in the daily Sawt Al Sbaab.

"Farmers have been in the habit of acquiring loans from the Agricultural Credit Corporation, the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO) and the Jordan Valley Farmers Association (JVFA) which altogether have given JD 40 million since 1973," the minister said.

All these organisations, he said, will be encompassed under the umbrella of the Agricultural Council as a means of unifying their operations.

"At the same time the farmers in Jordan are being given freedom to grow crops of their own choice as the ministry has now scrapped the agricultural cropping pattern system which required farmers to grow certain crops in certain areas as this system proved futile," the minister said.

"To help farmers purchase farming requirements like fertilis-

ers and seeds, the ministry is now working out new regulations for this trade and is keeping control over the quality of these materials," the minister said.

"To help market Jordan's products, the Ministry of Agriculture been conducting a process of reorganising the Jordan Agricultural Marketing and Processing Company (JAMPCO) which is in charge of importing products badly needed on local markets and marketing Jordan's crops abroad," Arabiyat said.

According to the minister, Jordan last year exported JD 114 million worth of crops to Arab and foreign countries which earned the Kingdom badly needed foreign currency.

"We are helping the farmers increase their output and exports and the Ministry of Agriculture has banned the imports of all types of crops with the exception of onions and apples in a bid to encourage local farmers," the minister pointed out.

He said that Jordan was in need of foreign markets which constitute a good source of income that would help not only the national economy but would encourage local farmers production.

The arable lands in Jordan, he said, depend mostly on rain fall which, this year, was around the average level and the farmers

expect to have a good harvest especially in the north and central regions, as well as the Jordan Valley.

He said that the southern regions have been badly affected by drought and the government was trying to do all it could to help local farmers.

Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Secretary-General Mohammad Bani Hani told the daily Sawt Al Sbaab that King Talal dam, which normally irrigates the Jordan Valley fields in the dry season, had 40.5 million cubic metres of water.

He nevertheless warned of a catastrophe should the same level of poor rainfall occur in the next season.

Bani Hani said that the water stored in the reservoir will be definitely used up in irrigation programmes before the coming winter season when the lands will be awaiting more water.

"The dam has a total capacity of nearly 80 million cubic metres of water of which 63 million were available at the end of the past winter season, unlike this year, when relatively little water has been accumulated," Bani Hani said.

He said the amount of rain which fell this year was almost the same as last year but the rains were light and scattered on a wider area.

Ministry plans campaign to improve Jordan Valley

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment will provide the necessary help to the municipal and village councils in the Jordan Valley to help them establish slaughter houses, garbage dumps and to assist their efforts in protecting water resources.

This was announced by Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Karim Al Dughmli during an inspection tour of the Jordan Valley region where he held

meetings with local officials and farmers to hear their views about the health situation in the region.

The minister reviewed a working paper on providing health safety and protection from pollutants especially in agriculture.

A statement later said that agreement was reached at the meeting to launch a wide scale campaign in the Jordan Valley immediately to eliminate common flies and rodents, a process to be conducted in cooperation with the Amman municipality.

The minister also gave instruc-

tions for a study to be conducted on the best methods to use natural fertilisers that wouldn't infest the areas with pests.

Jordan Valley is a popular site for vacationers especially in the winter season, and current efforts are being made to create suitable recreational centres for the visitors.

Among topics discussed at the meeting was the question of disposing of waste materials and ways of protecting the water resources and irrigation networks.

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Supremacy of morality

POPE JOHN Paul's expression of support for a Palestinian homeland during his meeting with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat at the Vatican Friday carries weight in more than one way. To begin with, it is no small measure for the spiritual leader of the Catholic Church to come out in the open in support of the Palestinians' national aspirations. This support is also a reminder of the moral position of the Vatican on the entire Palestine case. Among other things, the Vatican has always called for the internationalisation of the city of Jerusalem and respect for the Palestinians' national rights in their ancestral homeland. And until this point in time, the Vatican has refused to bestow recognition on the state of Israel until it heeds the dictates of the consciences of mankind. This exemplary and highly moral position on the Palestinian conflict has ennobled the relations between Israel and the Vatican and put them at loggerheads over the fundamentals pertaining to this problem. One cannot therefore but express admiration and pride in the unwavering stand of the Vatican on the Palestinian situation. For starters, this highly ethical stance by the Vatican with regard to Palestinian rights and aspirations has withstood the test of time. At a time when many countries wavered on their position on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Vatican stood by its guns and upheld its unshaken posture on it with all the might of moral and spiritual persuasion. Sure enough, time has proved the Vatican right as most members of the international community are now back to square one in their efforts to defuse the Arab-Israeli conflict and resolve the Palestinian problem. The latest pronouncement on the right of the Palestinians for a homeland on their soil by Pope John Paul fortifies the faith of the Palestinians in their struggle for freedom and self-determination and bolsters their conviction in their case. To have the support of the Vatican is something that all Arabs, especially the Palestinians, would cherish and appreciate for all times. Above all, this support for the Palestinian cause by the Pope demonstrates the supremacy of morality over expediency.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Sunday called on the Arabs to be aware of the United States which is working against peace in the Middle East, and said the Arabs should be on their guard during a visit to the Middle East soon by a U.S. Congress team. The paper said the team's visit comes in the wake of the U.S. Congress's declaration of total support of Israel's claim that Jerusalem is its united capital in violation of all international laws and United Nations resolutions. The team arrives here at a time when Washington is spearheading a hostile campaign against Iraq, when the United States is openly helping Soviet Jews to settle in the occupied Arab territories and at a time when Washington is totally opposed to the idea of an international conference on the Palestine issue and the Middle East question, the paper pointed out. It asked what the congressmen would hope to achieve from this tour, and whether the mission is really designed to help achieve peace. The paper said that the United States has lost all its credibility in the Middle East region at a time when it continues to encourage Israel to pursue its inhuman practices and to perpetuate its occupation of Arab lands. The U.S. Congress team, the paper said, should realise that the Arabs have already announced their total commitment to peace based on justice, and that Israel, Washington's ally, is the party that places obstacles in the path of that peace.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Sunday calls on the judicial authorities to impose the heaviest possible penalties on the thieves who stole the mosaic floor from an ancient desert castle in Jordan and urges the legislative authority to enact a law that can deal very effectively with such crimes which are committed against the Kingdom's cultural heritage. Salah Abdul Samad says that the imposition of a heavy punishment could be sufficient to deter thieves from committing such thefts which are directed against the country as a whole and designed to deprive the Kingdom from precious wealth, probably in collusion with foreign agents. The writer expresses appreciation for the work of the security authorities which were quick and very efficient, retrieving the valuable piece of art in a very short period of time, but he notes that other thieves could be planning to steal other pieces of art work and artefacts; and that only a proper deterrent can stop this crime in the country. It is time, says the writer, that the penalty be imposed for such crimes be on a parallel level of the immensity of the crime itself, and in his case a long prison term with hard labour — could serve as a proper deterrent.

Sawt Al Shabab daily on Sunday said that the past two decades were the worst in the history of the Arab World during which the Arabs had pinned all their hopes for peace on the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242. The paper said that the Arabs had hoped that the United Nations and the international community would solve their problems for them while at the same time the Arab countries remained in a state of division and weakness as Israel continued to grow in strength. Now following President Saddam Hussein's declaration of the Arab Nation's readiness to retaliate in the event of an external attack, the Arab masses can breathe more freely as they feel stronger than ever, and capable of dealing with the challenges and the threats, the paper noted. The paper said that the Arab World should realise that Israel and its allies are working day and night to isolate them from the rest of the world, prior to imposing capitulation on the Arab states. It is true that Iraq has now acquired a deterrent force the paper added, but one has to admit that the Arabs must build a unified intrinsic force that can not only deter the enemies but can help regain the usurped Arab lands.

Weekly Political Pulse

Deterrence boosts peace

By Waleed Sadi

THE ADVENT of mass destructive weapons to the Middle East be they nuclear, chemical or biological is in many ways a blessing in disguise. As ominous as these weapons are, they can still perform the function that nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons had performed for the last 40 years in East-West relations. It will be recalled that no major war had erupted between the Warsaw and NATO alliances due to this nuclear deterrent that both blocs had enjoyed. The same rationale would, of course, apply to the Middle East region where mass-destructive weapon deterrence can attain the same result that was obtained in the context of East-West relations. There is no doubt that Israel and the Arab World would think twice before launching a war for fear that such a conflagration can

unleash missiles carrying mass destructive weapons against each other. Thus the stakes in the Middle East have been heightened to intolerable proportions for the two sides by the introduction of nuclear and other mass destruction weapons to the region on the negative side what is projected to ensue from this balance of terror is a stalemate and the maintenance of the status quo. Yet, status quo is not what the Arab side wants or seeks albeit the prevention of a major conflagration in which mass destructive weapons could be exchanged is also an apparent priority.

Nevertheless balance of terror in the Middle East can still attain a meaningful and beneficial effect in the sense that whereas nuclear and like-natured weapons will rule out an

all out war between Israel and its Arab neighbours, a limited or a guerrilla kind of fighting can still be prosecuted by the Arab side with relative immunity from it ever escalating into a wider military conflict. This is where the Arab side in general and the Palestine side in particular can attain the desired objectives by exploiting this balance of terror to the optimum. To begin with, the Palestinian intifada can not only continue but also escalate into a more potent uprising if need be without fear of leading into a major war. By denying total peace to Israel, through the uprising, while simultaneously denying it the ultimate option of going into a full scale war against the Arab side, the Palestinian side can bolster their bargaining power to a considerable extent. By so doing, the Palestinian rights

and aspirations can be pursued indefinitely until they are realised.

This entire scenario is clearly dependent on the ability of the Arab side to attain this balance of terror. As of now neither Israel nor its friends and allies are totally convinced that the Arab side can match Israel's nuclear capability. As long as Israel thinks and calculates that the Arab side has not yet caught up with it and that time is propitious to launch sneak attacks against their advanced military projects for mass destructive weapons, then the chances of a major conflagration breaking out in the Middle East would continue to be there. That is why the major powers would be better advised to speed up the Arab efforts to neutralise the Israeli nuclear threat by facilitating

their crash programmes to acquire comparable weapons in the shortest possible time and before Israel completes its preparations for such attacks against Arab military targets. Only through the attainment of a balance of terror in the Middle East would there be real peace in the Middle East. There is no way to reverse the tide of mass destructive weapons in the region. The genie was out the bottle, the minute Israel acquired a nuclear capability and no amount of pious statements or wishful thinking would put it right back. The only sensible thing to do now is to give the Arab side the ability and opportunity to acquire a deterrent. The least that the international community especially the major powers among them should do now is to cease and desist

from crying wolf every time one or two Arab countries are at the threshold of obtaining comparable weapons. To do otherwise is to invite war and make the outbreak of a major war between the Arab and Israeli sides more imminent than ever. Seen against this backdrop, Iraq's acquisition of mass destruction weapons to face Israel's nuclear weapons is more of a boost to peace in the Middle East than the other way around. Of course one would have hoped that some of these weapons had been introduced to the Middle East. But that is a wishful thinking and instead of shedding tears about lost opportunities, it would be more sane to explore the new opportunities for peace in the Middle East created by these weapons.

Israel and South Africa: divergent twins

By Naseer H. Aruri

ISRAEL and South Africa have much in common, yet they evoke divergent perceptions and responses in American society. They represent the last bastions of the colonial-settler enterprise and the strongholds of *heerwolk* democracy (democracy for the settlers but not for the natives). Only in these two "democracies" is segregation of groups firmly entrenched in the social and legal fabrics of society and in the administrative practices of the state. The Blacks in South Africa are restricted to 12 per cent of their national patrimony while the Palestinians now live on 13 per cent of theirs. The present alternative to equal rights and citizenship in South Africa and in Israel is limited autonomy. Whereas "native reserves" set up for Blacks in South Africa became the Bantustans, the remaining 45 per cent of the West Bank and 65 per cent of Gaza would be established as the Palestinian Bantustans, if the so-called Middle East peace process leads to a breakthrough under present auspices.

There is no shortage of analogies between South Africa and Israel. In both places, the colonial settler either denied the existence of the indigenous native or wished his disappearance. The wordless wish in South Africa took the form of enforced segregation; in Palestine, it took the form of denial. Hence Israel Zangwill's declaration of Palestine as a "land without people for people without land" and Golda Meir's later declaration of the Palestinians as non-people who simply "do not exist." Their existence can only be recognised as that of an ethnic, not a national minority, a minority not entitled to share in the allocation of power. Menachem Begin described this minority, which during his lifetime was the majority of the population in Palestine, as "the Arabs of Eretz Israel."

Both Zionist and Afrikaner nationalism are scripturally based ideologies which claim a moral mission. Palestine was the land promised by the Almighty effectively to Abraham and his son Isaac, though not Ishmael. It would provide the context for an "ingathering of exiles." Likewise, the preamble to the South African constitution claims that, "Almighty God... who has guided them (Afrikaners) from generation to generation; who has wondrously delivered them from the dangers that beset them, gathered their forebears together from many lands and gave them this for their own..." There is no place for revisionist history in either Pretoria or Tel Aviv; and yet while the religious motive is in the forefront, the colonial enterprise, in both places, was propelled by a pursuit of power and greed. In both spheres, the native has been defined by the oppressed as a problem: as demographic one which can only be corrected by permanent subjugation, "transfer", a euphemism for mass expulsion, or by population control.

Native resistance

In both spheres, the natives launched a national resistance, which included armed struggle as well as non-violent civil disobedience. Both struggles were countered with a policy of state terrorism directed against the internal resistance and their sanctuaries neighbouring states. Both systems became international pariahs because of their discriminatory practices and consistent patterns of human rights violations. South Africa's legal arsenal

of repression, which includes the Internal Security Act, the Terrorism Act, the Pass Laws, the Group Areas Act, among others, is matched by a similar arsenal in Israel that includes the Land Settlement Act, the Absentee Property Act, the Defence (Emergency) Regulations and the Anti-Terrorism Act, among others. These acts have facilitated in both countries land alienation, restriction of movement and due process, systematic harassment, banishment and other infringements. As in totalitarian states, the lives of the natives are completely regulated by the army and/or the ministry of justice.

American inconsistency

Both regimes came under the protection of Washington, in one way or another, but while civil society in the U.S. dissented on South Africa, it was made to acquiesce in the case of Israel. The case for Black liberation in South Africa has penetrated the political consciousness of liberal America, including broad sectors of the legislative branch, the media, the peace/church community, the anti-nuclear movement, but not the executive branch of the government. The case for Palestinian independence, on the other hand, did not even merit a debate in the American public arena. Why, then, despite so many similarities between oppressed and the oppressor, the usurped and the usurper, the colonised and the coloniser in Palestine and South Africa, are there such glaring inconsistencies in the American response in particular and the Western response in general to the two situations?

The following areas may be examined. First, unlike the apartheid regime in Pretoria, Israel has the ability of turning history on its head — the oppressor becomes the oppressed, the powerful insecure, the vocal voiceless, and the settler native! The myopia is made easy by a unique and sacred legacy, which not only disguises Israel's transgressions, but also provides a barrier against criticism and a shelter against normal scrutiny. The Afrikaners have no equivalent of the Holocaust to use and misuse in their attempt to justify apartheid. Nor do they have an equivalent of the Jewish lobby (AIPAC) in Washington to hold the U.S. Congress in line. Also absent are the various constituencies at Israel's beck and call, which operate in congressional committees, human rights organisations, the Christian churches, the media and even among the American Left. It would be unthinkable for a representative of the Pretoria regime to gain equal time in the U.S. with the victims or opponents of apartheid in the public discourse on human rights. By contrast, the Israeli perspective, which dominates the U.S. mainstream agenda on the Middle East, is assured of easy access to the councils of the underclass.

The persistence of Zionist organisations and their willingness and ability to utilise intimidation and pressure techniques contributed to a *de facto* removal of Israel from the ranks of the worst violators of human rights: South Africa, Chile, China, and El Salvador, among others. Israel's supporters insist that Israel is treated at par with its "peers", i.e. the Western "democracies". Thus a campaign to trim aid to Israel by as much as five per cent (Senator Dole's suggestion), not as a punishment for violation of human rights but as part of a reallocation to accommodate Eastern Europe,

would never get off the ground, let alone a major effort to impose sanctions, as in the case of South Africa. The latter, which has no similar friends in the U.S. to remove it from the ranks of the most unfavoured nations, was punished and ultimately forced to lift the state of emergency, legalise the African National Congress and release black nationalist leaders from prison. The weight of years of anti-apartheid campaigning, which produced a web of legislation and actions by universities, corporations and financial institutions, has taken its toll on the white racist regime.

And yet, Israel and South Africa have been notorious for their resolute defiance of the international will, though in the end it was American pressure that truly counted. The disinvestment movement in the United States ultimately persuaded Congress to pass the sanction laws in 1986 over Reagan's veto. At last, the U.S. did associate itself with the global consensus on South Africa, but continued its isolation from that consensus on Israel.

Disinvestment for one, not the other

Given the unique character of Israel, discussed above, disinvestment would be unthinkable. In fact, here the opposite is true: the special relationship is constantly nurtured and upgraded. Consider America's present to Israel on its 40th birthday, which included the status of a "principal non-NATO ally," a partner in Star Wars research, in addition to being the recipient of one third of America's total foreign aid in the entire world. Moreover, the U.S. government has so far been paying Israel's bill for suppressing the intifada, on behalf of all tax-

payers, thus making them accomplices in crimes of state in the Nuremberg sense. By contrast, U.S. sanctions cost the South African economy heavily in terms of loss of capital exports, investments and new loans. Many state legislatures ordered their pension fund managers to sell off stocks in companies trading with South Africa. By contrast, the U.S. government increased its economic aid to Israel from \$3 billion to \$3.666 billion in fiscal 1989 and 1990.

Thus disinvestment in South Africa, which contributed to the potential collapse of apartheid, is paralleled by empowerment, which buys Israel time to suppress the intifada and nurture its diplomatic intransigence. Or compare President Bush's invitation to Nelson Mandela to visit the White House with the U.S. government's refusal to grant Yasser Arafat a visa to address the United Nations. America's association with international morality and legality in South Africa is contrasted by its contravention of the international will, which demands independence for the Palestinians as it demands equal rights for the blacks in South Africa.

Arab-Americans fail

In addition to the hurdles embedded in the American body politic, there are problems associated with the Palestinian cause and its supporters and guardians. The Arab-American community has simply failed to develop a focal point for a broad campaign such as the one spearheaded by TransAfrica, despite auspicious circumstances for a public debate over the reallocation of foreign aid. Arab-American organisations are in no position to play the

vanguard role, as black-American organisations did in the anti-apartheid movement. The lack of coherence, coordination and sense of purpose essential for creating a broad coalition to lobby against Israeli infractions. And yet there is no shortage of moral and legal imperatives for such a campaign. An objective look inwardly, and I speak as a Palestinian committee to the national consensus, reveals a qualitative difference in the manner in which the Palestinian and Black South Africa causes are being managed.

Terrorist labels

Despite the fact that the terrorist label was misguidedly placed on both the ANC and the PLO, the black struggle in South Africa tends to receive a special moral weight in liberal and progressive America. Consider the similarities and contrast in the two approaches to liberation: the Palestinians, like the South Africans, launched armed struggle and declared their goal to be a democratic secular Palestine in which Arabs and Jews would live on the basis of equal rights, equal citizenship, one-person one-vote. Since that time, over two decades ago, both groups supplemented the "armed struggle" with political struggle inside (building mass organisations and alternative institutions) and diplomatic struggle abroad. The balance between these three forms of struggle has undergone shifts and adjustments to the local, regional and international realities, which now seem to favour a strategy of a synchronised political and diplomatic struggle.

In Palestine, the intifada supplanted the political struggle which normally leads the diplomatic

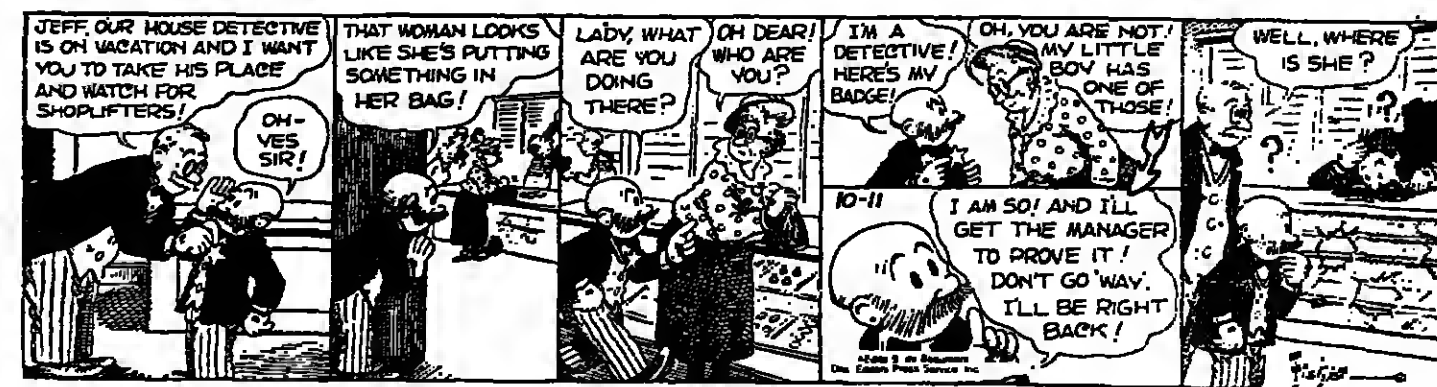
struggle. Hence, the political programme of the intifada was adopted by the Palestine National Council in November 1988 in Algiers. That programme, which opted for a historic compromise, did not abrogate or jeopardise the internationally recognised rights of the Palestinian people, including their struggle for liberation by all available means, "including armed struggle". Resolution 3236 affirmed their right to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty and Resolution 3210 recognised the PLO as sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In reality, however, these inalienable rights can only aspire to become potential items on the diplomatic agenda of the "peace process", i.e. the Israeli 20-point plan of May 1989, designated by Secretary Baker as "the only game in town." In fact, some of them such as sovereignty have already been excluded outright by the self-styled peace-maker, co-belligerent.

Mandela's effective tactic

The major question concerning the Palestine case is not the proximity of the protagonists to the negotiating table but the very existence of a table and the identity of the carpenters. On the other hand, the South African national movement conceded nothing except a willingness to balance majority rule with the type of structural guarantees that this will not mean Black domination of the whites. The ANC insisted on its right to shape the table, to determine the rules of the game and to redraw the political and

(Continued on page 5)

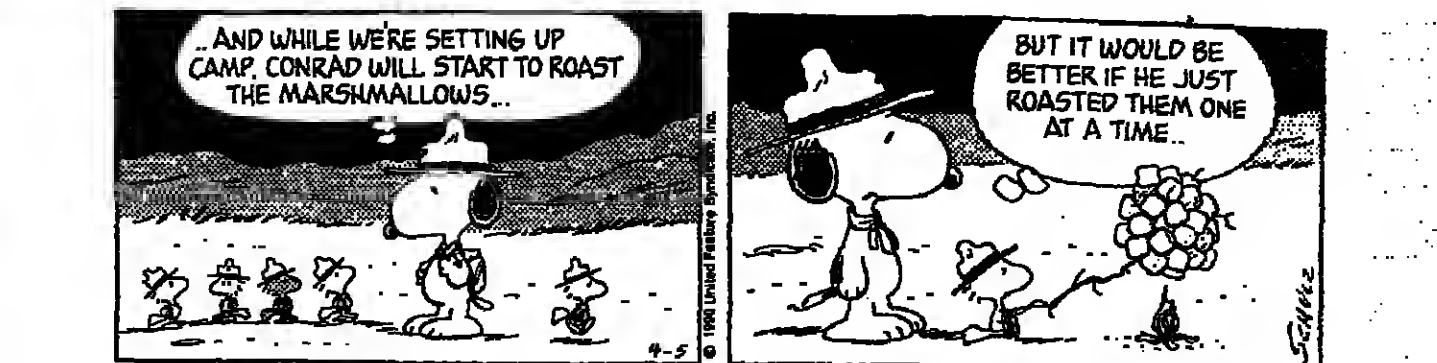
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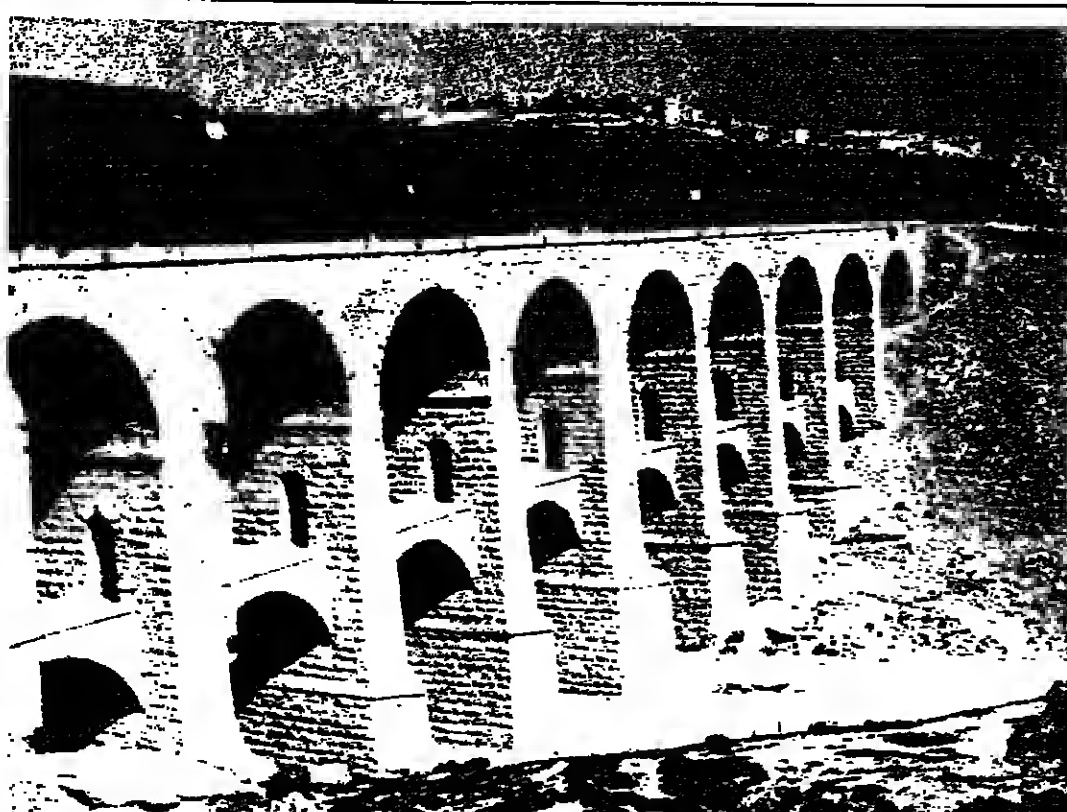


German engineer built the Hijaz railway

By Kurt Westphal

DRESDEN (DaD) — For centuries every Muslim's fondest wish has been to make the Haj to Mecca and Medina, at least once in his life. It used to be a really strenuous journey of a lifetime. But a new era dawned on Sept. 1 1908 when Syrian Muslims had to go no further than Damascus and then take the famous Hijaz railway from Damascus to Medina. This celebrated 1,302-kilometre (814-mile) railway spanning deserts and mountains was built by a German engineer, Heinrich Meissner. He died 50 years ago, in 1940, as a highly esteemed professor at the Technical University in Istanbul.

Meissner was born in Dresden, where he studied engineering, specialising in civil engineering, with the emphasis on tunnel, dike and railway construction. He also learnt Turkish. His time came when Sultan Abdul Hamid decided, at the end of the 19th century, to build the Hijaz railway, which was dubbed "Allah's holy line" on account of its



The Hijaz railway

religious significance. It crossed 1,532 bridges, passed through two tunnels and linked 96 stations, costing 75 million Swiss gold francs, the equivalent of roughly \$2 billion today. The railway only went as far as Medina. Plans to continue it to Mecca were drawn up but never did leave the drawing board, and the line was largely destroyed during World War I. Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Syria were considering rebuilding it in the 1960s, but to this day the surviving sections of the Hijaz

railway are still ghost lines in the desert sand. The Baghdad railway, from the Bosphorus to the Tigris, fared better. Work on this first direct rail link between Europe and Asia, which was also designed and built by Meissner, began in 1911. Seven years later the Turkish section crossed the Taurus mountains; work at the Baghdad end began in 1912. By the end of World War I only a 500-kilometre section remained to be completed. The 117-kilometre railway between the

Jordanian phosphate workings and Aqaba was also planned by Meissner, but not completed until 15 years ago, in 1975. Meissner, ennobled as Meissner Pasha in 1904, had to leave Turkey after World War II. He spent several years working for the Albanian government before he was able to return to Istanbul. An acknowledged international authority on railway construction, he ended his career as an engineering professor in the Turkish capital.

Turkish system halts trafficking but farmers are far from happy

By Emel Anil
The Associated Press

BOLVADIN, Turkey — For 5,000 years, farmers have been growing opium poppies on the dusty flatlands of central Turkey. Since 1974 they have been doing it under government supervision to keep the poppies from becoming heroin.

Turkish and U.S. narcotics police praise the system as virtually smuggle-proof. A small army of inspectors is at work to ensure the crop is used exclusively for medicine and doesn't fall into the hands of traffickers.

But the farmers are less than happy. "In the old days we could marry off two sons in one season with the earnings from our poppy fields," said Halil Altintas, the headman of Ozburn village. "Now the bride prices are up but the price for poppies remains too low."

Just as coca leaves grown in Central and South America are in the centre of a U.S. battle against cocaine, Turkey's opium poppies were the target of a war on drugs in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The United States contended that at least half of the heroin reaching its addicts originated in Turkish poppy fields that spread across seven provinces of the barren Anatolian plain.

In 1971, a military-controlled Turkish government banned poppy production under strong pressure from Washington. In 1974, after restoration of civilian rule, poppy cultivation was resumed

under a system aimed at limiting production for pharmaceutical use.

The troubles encountered since then mostly have had to do with production bottlenecks and pricing policies. U.S. narcotics officials, working in cooperation with Turkish counterparts, say no heroin from the Turkish crop has been discovered on the illicit market.

One reason was that cultivation could resume only under license. More importantly, the farmers were forced to harvest only dry pods.

Instead of slitting the tangerine-sized poppy pods to let opium gum ooze out, the method used for heroin, farmers have to let the pods dry on the fields in summer heat.

From dried opium poppies come the morphine derivatives that can be extracted only in a sophisticated alkaloids facility for use as legal pain killers.

As a next step, Turks started the construction of the largest and most advanced alkaloids factory in the world here in the heart of the poppy-growing region, 250 kilometres southwest of Ankara, the capital.

Turkey spent \$90 million to build the factory and over the next 10 years laid out an additional \$15 million to the farmers, since the government is legally obligated to buy the poppy pods.

The pods are light but bulky, and therefore difficult to export. About 76,000 tons piled up in storage, enough to keep the factory going at full capacity for four

years. Cultivation was discouraged by low state prices. By 1986, the factory went into full production. The Turkish alkaloids board captured more than 50 per cent of the U.S. market and about 40 per cent of the world market for morphine and codeine and started earning about \$10 million a year.

But the good times did not last. The plant has been idle since December for lack of pods.

But there are no plans to give up cultivation. Farmers and officials agree that the poppy is still the most suitable cash crop for the sandy soil of the arid region.

Last year's crop was only 3,000 tons, the result of autumn drought, winter frost and the farmers' unwillingness to cultivate at the state purchase price of 350 Turkish liras (14 cents) per kilogramme of dried pods.

India is the only other legal producer of poppies on a large scale. Australia has recently come into the market.

The United States supports Indian and Turkish control efforts with a pledge to buy 80 per cent of its needs from the two countries.

The demand for morphine and derivatives is not flexible, averaging about 200 tons a year. Competition is fierce for market share, and prices for the drug

have come down to about \$180 a kilogramme from \$800 when Turkey devised the blueprint for its factory.

Turks have tripled the price for poppy pods this year to encourage farmers. Yet Atilla Yildirim, the manager of the alkaloids plant, says they cannot go too far with that kind of incentive and still have a competitive edge in the drug market.

But there are no plans to give up cultivation. Farmers and officials agree that the poppy is still the most suitable cash crop for the sandy soil of the arid region.

Whatever their troubles with supply and demand, the officials of the state soil products office and Yildirim and his staff at the plant are proud of their security arrangements.

Some 600 inspectors, backed by reconnaissance planes, keep track of the fields to prevent any unlicensed cultivation or slitting for opium gum.

The morphine is kept in storage behind steel doors. Armoured trucks transport the production from factory to cargo planes with military and police escorts.

"This place is better protected and less accessible to outsiders than most military bases," Yildirim said.

But the illegal narcotics dealers have not been put out of business. Narcotics officials say they benefit from the heroin smuggled through Turkey from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and elsewhere, in the Middle East to Western markets.

King calls for Arab summit

(Continued from page 1)

Middle East issue would be settled.

The projected Palestinian-Israeli dialogue, the King said, will no doubt open the door for the achievement of a comprehensive peace in the region.

"The Palestine problem is a problem for all Arabs and Egypt and Jordan have been shouldering their responsibility towards the Palestinian people and the two countries are now awaiting moves from the other parties towards peace," he said.

Mubarak, who was present at the press meeting, said that his discussion with the King covered the present Arab situation and the campaign directed against Iraq.

Mubarak, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein who held talks earlier Saturday in Iraq, said: "Egypt is trying its best to declare

the Middle East an area clear of weapons of mass destruction."

Last Monday President Hussein warned that Iraq would "burn half of Israel" if the Jewish state attacked it, prompting angry protests in Israel and from the United States.

Egyptian officials said privately that Mubarak was anxious not to allow the war of words to harm the Labour Party's chances of forming a new government in Israel.

"My quick trips to Baghdad and Jordan were aimed at defusing the escalation resulting from threats to Iraq," Mubarak told newspaper editors during the stopover in Aqaba.

Mubarak said plans were underway for an Arab summit.

"High-level contacts will be carried out... seeking coordination and preparation for an Arab summit. We must discuss the impact of latest world changes on

the Arabs..." he said.

He said he would visit Damascus after the fasting month of Ramadan ends later this month.

"There is a golden opportunity for peace now and we must push hard to benefit from this chance," Mubarak said.

The Middle East News Agency (MENA) carried what it said were comments Mubarak made to Egyptian newspaper editors on the flight home as well as remarks made in a joint press conference with President Hussein.

"Iraq had without doubt been facing a campaign," Mubarak said. "I have spoken about this issue with leaders in the United States, some European countries and other states, and assured them that Iraq is not a country which wants or calls for war."

Mubarak said he had sent messages to these countries, telling them that Iraq wanted a "just peace" and not war.

Likud

(Continued from page 1)

small factions and individual members of parliament.

But Attorney-General Yosef Harish cautioned against any hasty reform that could produce an executive leader without proper parliament checks and balances.

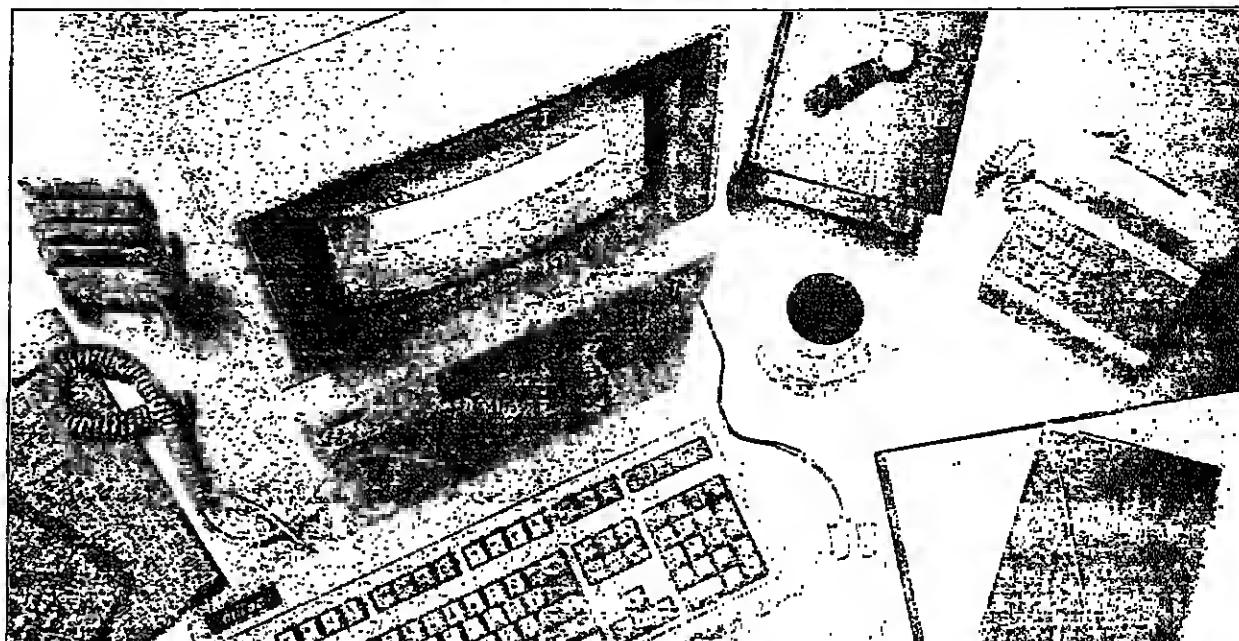
Protesters, in what a senior police official termed Israel's biggest-ever demonstration, condemned leaders for offering cabinet seats and political favours to potential backers.

The Israeli supreme court ruled on Sunday it was forbidden and against the public interest to offer financial guarantees to political partners.

A breakaway Likud faction had demanded up to \$10 million in bank guarantees to ensure Likud met its obligations in a coalition agreement.

Members of two key religious parties, Shas and the National Religious Party, said they still backed a Likud-led government but did not rule out switching.

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Israel and South Africa

(Continued from page 4)

geographic map of South Africa. Nelson Mandela, asserting from prison that his task was to bring the two parties to the negotiating table, wrote to the former president of South Africa, P.W. Botha, reiterating the ANC's rejection of the government's conditions for negotiations: renunciation of violence, breaking with the Communist party and repudiation of majority rule. He gave a categorical "no" to each of them.

By contrast, the Israeli government maintains a state of martial law in occupied Palestine, bans all political activities, and, together with Washington, treat the PLO as an illegal organisation. Then it turns around, sets the framework and determines the agenda as well as the qualifications of negotiating partners. There are no Palestinian conditions similar to those laid down by the ANC — to lift the ban on the PLO in Palestine and in the United States, to free Palestinian political prisoners, to terminate the "state of emergency," and to commit itself to negotiating with the recognised representatives of

the Palestinian people on the basis of U.N. resolutions and good faith.

Having become the de facto sole arbiter of the Palestine-Israel conflict in the mid-1970s, the U.S. has had ample time and opportunity to produce a just and durable settlement. Instead, however, it chose a "bantustan" solution. By declaring the Israeli election plan as the "only game in town," it expects the PLO to accept it or be counted out of the diplomatic process, the intent of which is to create an alternative pliant leadership of the Palestinian community under occupation, to fragment the Palestinian people into "insiders" and "outsiders", and to delegitimise their wider political rights. And so, while the solution in South Africa reflects a global consensus, the solution in Palestine, under U.S. auspices, will be contrary to that consensus. While the U.S. celebrates the triumph of pluralism and equality in South Africa, it cynically suppresses the Palestinian struggle for the same ideals.

Dr. Arun is professor of political science at Southeastern Massachusetts University. His article is reprinted from Middle East International, London.

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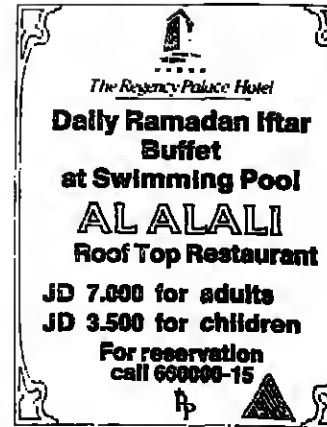
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Tehran, Moscow sign accord on gas exports

NICOSIA (Agencies)—Iran and the Soviet Union signed a 15-year agreement on the export of Iranian natural gas Sunday, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported.

Oil Minister Gholamreza Azagadeh, speaking to reporters, said the first shipments of gas would move Monday and that the two sides had agreed that the price of the gas would be adjusted monthly according to international rates.

Exports will start at three billion cubic metres annually and could go as high as 10 billion, said IRNA, monitored in Nicosia.

Azagadeh said the gas could also be transhipped through the Soviet pipeline network to Eastern and Western Europe. He noted that it would probably not remain the only land route to Europe, as negotiations were underway with Turkey for a pipeline.

The Soviet Union will receive the gas at the Caspian Sea port of Astrakhan, said the report. The city was the site of heated riots by Soviet Azerbaijanis earlier this year who demanded that the closed border be opened. The two nations earlier negotiated an agreement for cross border visits.

The Iranian minister also noted that a massive gas pipeline network was under construction in Iran that should boost the country's capacity to 150 million cubic feet a day from its reserves of 48 trillion cubic feet, most in the south of the country.

Under the five year plan that just started, the number of cities to be supplied with natural gas

Paper backs foreign investment

An Iranian newspaper Sunday welcomed foreign investment in the form of joint ventures, a key part of government policy which radicals oppose.

Deals like one agreed last week with Italy, under which Iran is expected to manufacture Fiat cars and other goods, benefit both sides, the Tehran Times said in an editorial.

Tehran has said the accord with Italy, covering trade as well as investment, could be worth \$13 billion over a five-year national economic plan that began in January.

Hardliners oppose the liberalising economic policies of President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who is seeking Western investment to rebuild an economy shattered by eight years of war with Iraq.

"Iran can turn to be an economic basket for the whole region," the English-language Tehran Times said.

The paper, which generally supports Rafsanjani, also called for competent management of industries. Independent economists say inefficiency and corruption are rife in the state-dominated industrial sector.

Peking to issue rules limiting private sector

PEKING (Agencies)—China will soon issue new regulations restricting private-sector businesses, an official newspaper said Sunday.

The China Daily said the government would prohibit private enterprises from doing business in such sectors as finance, foreign trade, the military, real estate, railways and ocean shipping.

Manufacturing and dealing in dangerous chemical products, explosives, some medicines, and important raw materials would also be banned.

The government would however encourage private businesses in the service sector, "small commodities," and farm products. High technology and export-oriented enterprises would be helped.

All private businesses will have to re-register to keep their licenses under the new regulations, the daily said.

More than three million private entrepreneurs have been driven out of business since the Communist government launched an austerity policy in late 1988 to curb runaway inflation and overheated economic growth.

But the China Daily said that under the new rules, private enterprises "would soon discover new business opportunities thanks to government efforts to reinvigorate the market."

Peking would also restrain over-zealous local governments which have banned private firms from doing lawful business, the newspaper said.

Encouraged since reforms were launched in 1978, private businesses have been the first to suffer from sudden policy changes.

China's leaders have made it clear in recent policy speeches that the private sector will be allowed only a strictly limited role in the economy and that a middle-class of entrepreneurs

Workforce declines

China's urban workforce declined by 1.5 million in the first two months of 1990, with smaller collective firms showing the largest loss of workers, the China Daily said Sunday.

The drop in the number of working people continued a year-long slump in the labour market caused by government austerity measures that have curbed inflation but brought economic growth to a standstill.

Millions of factories around the country have closed down or are operating at reduced pace because of lack of raw materials and operating funds.

The China Daily, quoting State Statistical Bureau figures, said the workforce stood at 136 million at the end of February, down 1.5 million from the end of 1989.

State-owned enterprises employed 100.4 million, a drop of 713,000, while collectively owned businesses had 34.3 million workers, 726,000 fewer than in December.

Private businesses had 1.3 million on their payrolls, a decline of 58,000.

The government put the urban unemployment rate at 2.3 per cent at the end of 1989, although Chinese economists privately say the jobless rate is closer to four per cent.

Those figures do not include the serious problem of surplus labour in the countryside, where 800 million of China's 1.1 billion people live.

The strain of an estimated 100 million labourers who are not needed on farms had been eased in recent years by the rapid growth of rural enterprises, but many such enterprises have closed down or have laid off workers in the past year because of the economic slowdown.

U.S. national debt tops \$3 trillion mark

WASHINGTON (AP)—The national debt Monday topped more than \$3 trillion for the first time in history, the Treasury Department reported Tuesday.

That's \$3,000,000,000,000. Count them: A three and 12 zeroes. A person counting a \$1,000 bill each second would take 133 years just to reach \$1 trillion.

And when the national debt reached \$3 trillion, it meant that it would cost every man, woman and child \$12,000 to pay it off.

Peter Hollenbach, public affairs officer for treasury's bureau of public debt, said that despite a growing number of income tax receipts at this time of year, he expected the debt to continue to grow as long as the budget is not balanced.

The actual level of public debt subject to statutory limit at the end of the day Monday was \$3,023 trillion. That's just \$99.59 billion under the statutory limit of \$3,123 trillion.

Democratic opponents often pointed to the fact that President Ronald Reagan ran up more public debt in his eight years in office than all of his predecessors put together.

The federal deficit has continued to grow since then and totalled \$152.1 billion during the fiscal year ended last Sept. 30. Interest on the deficit during February totalled \$17.32 billion and is expected to reach \$25.85 billion for the year.

Yen dilemma shows limits of international monetary cooperation

PARIS (R)—Turmoil in Japan's financial markets has forced leading industrial nations into action but their pledge of support for the yen this weekend has failed to remove doubts about the strength of international cooperation.

Behind the carefully coded language of a communiqué issued after eight hours of talks on Saturday, there is a clear message to Japan that it must take prime responsibility for the yen and that there are limits to what other nations are prepared to do.

The group of seven (G-7) nations—the United States, Japan, West Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Canada—appears to have fallen back on the time-worn formula of rhetoric and hints of foreign exchange intervention to convince currency markets that they want to see a stronger yen.

In doing so, they have settled on the lowest common denominator for political agreement, stopping short of a full-blown rescue package and frustrating those policy-makers who would like to see the G-7 make the jump from crisis management to a directorate to run the world economy.

"There has been a general feeling among the G-7 that the

Japanese have not come anywhere close to taking the domestic monetary steps that would support a concerted intervention effort," said one monetary official Sunday.

One of the biggest sceptics is West Germany, with the Bundesbank far from convinced of the need to buy yen at a time when the mark is soft against other European currencies.

Bonn officials have also been critical of Tokyo's delay in raising interest rates last month to control inflation.

"We know full well the Bundesbank is not going to spend a penny of its own reserves to help the yen if the Japanese are not going to help themselves," said Christopher Potts, economist at Banque Indosuez in Paris.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady has taken a relatively relaxed view of Japan's problems, saying the yen had been more stable than he would have thought.

When G-7 finance ministers and central bank governors agreed earlier this year to meet in Paris they planned to put the emphasis on political and economic reforms in East Europe.

It was instead the upheaval on Japan's financial markets that dominated the talks, with the yen languishing near a three-year low against the dollar and the Tokyo stock market down 28 per cent this year before a slight recovery Friday.

Only the next days will show how much support Japanese Finance Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto has secured from his Western partners. In recent weeks foreign exchange intervention has been far from full-blooded, undermining confidence in the yen.

Economists say the communiqué language is not as strong as past G-7 statements and it remains to be seen if it will calm Tokyo's feverish markets and prevent any renewed stock price falls from spilling over onto Wall Street and European bourses.

The ministers agreed the yen's decline had "undesirable consequences" by aggravating trade imbalances but then went on to say they would "keep developments under review," suggesting the burden of action was on Tokyo to solve its own problems.

The key phrase that is G-7 speak for intervention, "coopera-

tion in exchange markets," was included. But their communiqué last September, when they were battling to prop up a weak West German mark, used stronger language.

Jim O'Neill, economist at the Swiss Bank in London, said Saturday's communiqué was couched in vague terms but added it still clearly pointed to central banks intervening Monday.

"It seems the G-7 are ready to intervene and perhaps more aggressively than before," he said.

It is, however, a far cry from the heyday of monetary cooperation and the Plaza Accord of 1985 when major industrial nations sealed a historic deal to push down the dollar.

That cooperation was intensified in February 1987 with the so-called "Louvre Accord" after a Paris meeting set secret targets to stabilise major world currencies.

But since then, the seven have seen their common interests diverge as their economies develop at different paces and domestic issues take precedence over international coordination.

Israel Discount Bank profit drops

TEL AVIV (R)—Israel Discount Bank, the country's third largest bank, said it had a net profit of \$32.6 million in 1989, down 4.3 per cent from the previous year.

Discount Managing-Director Gideon Lahav told reporters the decline in profitability was caused by lower interest rates that cut the bank's margins.

The bulk of Discount's profit was made by its U.S. subsidiary, Israel Discount Bank of New York, which reported a net profit of \$20.2 million in 1989, up 17 per cent from 1988.

Israel Discount Bank of New York is the largest Israeli-owned bank operating overseas. Based on its deposits at the end of 1989, it was the 63rd largest bank in the United States.

Barclays Discount Bank, an Israeli bank jointly held by Britain's Barclays Bank PLC and Discount, reported a net profit of \$8.3 million, down 40 per cent from its \$13.9 million profit in 1988.

Discount's consolidated pre-tax income from financial operations, before provision for bad debts, was \$448 million, a drop of 8.2 per cent from 1988. It wrote off \$79 million in bad debts, down 11 per cent.

Net return on shareholders' equity was 5.1 per cent in 1989, compared to 5.7 per cent in 1988.

Assets totalled \$15.4 billion at the end of 1989, a decrease of 2.7 per cent from 1988. Shareholders' equity was \$659 million, compared to \$637 million in 1988.

Discount, along with other major Israeli banks, was nationalised after agreeing to equalise the voting rights of all its normal shares, which the government bought from the public following a 1983 bank shares crash.

Government officials said last month they would sell the bank this year to the highest bidder.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Sunday, April 8, 1990		
Central Bank official rates		
	Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	670.0	674.0
Pound Sterling	1097.8	1104.4
Deutsche mark	395.5	397.9
Swiss franc	446.5	449.2
French franc	117.6	118.3
Japanese yen (for 100)	425.0	427.5
Dutch guilder	351.0	353.1
Swedish crown	109.4	110.1
Italian lira (for 100)	53.8	54.1
Belgian franc (for 10)	190.9	192.0

Jordan Times
Tel. 667171

Soviet Union lists first trade deficit in 14 years

MOSCOW (R)—The Soviet economy, its productivity collapsing amid ethnic and political unrest, chalked up a trade deficit of \$5.4 billion in 1989—the first in 14 years.

The grim figures, revealed Sunday by the Communist Party weekly Ekonomika I Zhizn (Economics and Life), follow reports that labour strikes and ethnic unrest have cut deeply into the country's productive muscle.

The continued damage, exacerbating deep social tensions, has increased pressure for a radical transformation to a market-style economy.

And it has added to the woes of the Kremlin, trying to contain separatism in the Baltic republics and growing restiveness along the country's southern flank.

The figures published in Ekonomika I Zhizn show a trade deficit of 3.3 billion roubles (\$5.4 billion), led by a sharp fall-off in energy exports and a jump in grain imports.

Total imports for 1989 amounted to 72.1 billion roubles (\$117 billion), while exports totalled 68.8 billion roubles (\$112 billion).

Oil exports were down 11.7 per cent from 144.2 million tonnes in 1988 to 127.3 million tonnes. Coal exports fell from 39.4 million tonnes to 37.5 million, a loss of 4.8 per cent.

At the same time, grain imports swelled 5.7 per cent, from 35 to 37 million tonnes.



Mikhail Gorbachev

Ekonomika I Zhizn said the overall 1989 trade shortfall was the first in 14 years.

The report blamed the deficit on the collapse in world commodity prices, especially oil.

"In the last four years the overall losses of the USSR from worsening trade conditions in comparison with 1985 totalled 44.8 billion roubles (\$73 billion)," it said.

"In order to compensate for lower oil prices, the Soviet Union was selling more raw materials than it did before."

The government daily Izvestia, meanwhile, reported that widespread social and ethnic unrest had continued to undermine the economy.

Frankfurt seeks larger role as world financial centre

FRANKFURT (R)—Frankfurt is looking for a larger global role and West German bankers hope it will overtake London as Europe's leading financial centre.

"The whole area around Frankfurt has a stronger growth potential than London," Citibank AG Management Board Chairman Guenter Rexrodt told Reuters.

"It does not mean that London is going to become insignificant, but the potential is here and that is where the growth is going to come."

London's reaction to Frankfurt's challenge has been to call for renewed cooperation between all major European exchanges.

Speaking in Frankfurt March 28, London Stock Exchange Chairman Andrew Hugh Smith said the London and Frankfurt markets should collaborate more closely.

A spokeswoman for the London Stock Exchange said this cooperation would not take place at the expense of other bourses.

"There are a number of different options and we are not planning to go it alone with Germany to the exclusion of other exchanges," she added.

London towers above Frankfurt in terms of stock market capitalisation. Last December London's capitalisation stood at \$2.28 trillion (\$3.74 trillion) while that of Frankfurt was a mere \$64 billion marks (\$331 billion).

But Frankfurt's supporters say the city on the River Main has other facilities to offer.

Frankfurt is home to West Germany's powerful and independent central bank, the Bundesbank. The glass towers of West Germany's leading commercial

banks dominate the city skyline.

"Frankfurt does not want to become the capital of a new (united) Germany," the influential newspaper Die Zeit wrote in an editorial recently. "It would prefer to become the capital of money and investment—for the whole of Europe."

Recent moves to enhance Frankfurt's international role have included the creation of the New Deutsche Terminboerse (DTB) futures and options exchange.

Launched in January this year, DTB wants to claw back German business lost to London's international financial futures exchange, although at present the fledgling exchange only trades options in 14 West German blue chip shares.

The city is also setting up a new electronic bank clearing system to replace the antiquated arrangement where couriers travel three times a day from one bank to another, handing over thousands of hand-written clearing slips.

Citibank's Rexrodt said Bonn's plans to abolish a controversial securities turnover tax from the start of next year would further help Frankfurt compete with London.

The move would encourage trade in instruments such as German bonds to move to Frankfurt.

In the longer term, West German bankers hope to entice the European Community's (EC) planned European central bank to Frankfurt. The city has already set aside a building plot to house a new European central bank building.

Bundesbank President Karl Otto Pöhl has said Frankfurt, as

the largest financial centre on the European mainland, has good chances of becoming the headquarters of a future European central bank.

Economists said Frankfurt had largely shaken off market fears it could lose out if Berlin became the capital of a United Germany.

"The Bundesbank's headquarters in Frankfurt should not be changed for the foreseeable future, if only for practical reasons," according to Pöhl.

As if to give the central bank support, West Germany's third largest commercial bank, Commerzbank AG, says it plans to move its legal headquarters to Frankfurt from Düsseldorf.

The move would reflect the increased importance of Frankfurt as a financial centre, the bank said. "Frankfurt is West Germany's international financial centre and it will stay that way," said Commerzbank spokesman Peter Fietzsch.

Deutsche Bank, West Germany's largest commercial bank, also has no plans to leave Frankfurt, although the bank's attention is increasingly focusing on East Europe. "We see no reason to go to Berlin," Bank Chief Executive Hilmar Kopper said recently.

"Frankfurt took a long time to get the infrastructure it now has, the banks cannot simply relocate," Commerzbank Executive Vice President Lutz Raettig told a recent banking seminar.

Frankfurt would remain an important financial centre, although Berlin had a chance of becoming a major centre for trade and commerce between East and West Europe, Raettig said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY APRIL 9, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A Full Moon day for taking a good look at all of your companions and to see what they would like to have you do so that you have a greater understanding in the days ahead.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) During the day try as well as you can to find out why business associates expect of you and tonight get off to a surprising new activity.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Delve into whatever public matter perplexes you and you can get correct answers during daytime but tonight find ways to implement your promises made.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Perfect as much as possible whatever your present activities are before tonight you get together with an unusual personality.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You have the chance now to make arrangements to engage in recreations and amusements that attract you, a work matter requires much attention.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Whatever you have in mind concerning making your home more of a haven of rest is good if you stick to fundamentals; tonight expect a surprise guest.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You now should be able to contact those outside persons who can assist in making your life more

productive, while tonight follow through on an inspiration.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Take some time out to get into all aspects of your present financial arrangements and improve them, tonight avoid some sudden, unusual expense.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A good day to set a campaign of action whereby you will be able to more quickly gain your personal longings, in evening accept a surprise favour.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Keeping yourself to the grindstone of duties to be performed makes it possible for you to accomplish a great deal today, tonight interesting task arises.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You have a supporter who will be at your back and call in some personal desire you wish to gain and later be with a friend who fascinates you.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Your worldly activities should have priority during the daytime so concentrate on, get them working well; evening to do something of a civic nature.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You have some advanced course of action you want to put in motion so get all factors involved today, tonight you see ways to make it work well.

THE Daily Crossword by Sidney L. Robbins

ACROSS

- 1 Anthracite
- 3 Speaker
- 5 Use a dirk
- 10 Run
- 14 Don't exist
- 15 Among for short
- 16 Fudgick sign?
- 19 Defamed
- 20 Takes care of
- 21 Alamos
- 22 Whimsical
- 23 West Pointer
- 26 Different
- 27 Kind of steer
- 30 Cambodian
- 31 Make sweaters
- 32 Top-notch
- 33 Grammatical's adnominal?
- 36 Formerly once
- 37 Fr.
- 38 psychologist
- 39 Immigrants' island
- 40 Koch & Sullivan
- 41 Enr'
- 42 Genuflect
- 43 Hara —
- 44 However for
- 45 Gazed
- 47 Large vans
- 52 Statement of conviction
- 53 Unchival
- 54 Crude metals
- 55 Catches —
- 56 Molding
- 57 Sludy hard
- 58 A Louie
- 59 Gorbachev turnaround

DOWN

- 1 Coin
- 2 Fragrance
- 3 Turk. title
- 4 TV's Gavin Mac —
- 5 Hears a case
- 6 Tour violently
- 7 Verb suffix
- 8 Waits nautically
- 9 Tale
- 10 So
- 11 Br. composer
- 12 Begins to develop
- 14 Tie
- 17 Kings
- 18 Unchival
- 22 "Fur —" (song)
- 23 Musical combo?
- 24 Awry
- 25 Adroit
- 26 Provide with a quality
- 27 Synthetic gem material
- 28 To that point
- 29 Glow
- 30 Patella's place
- 31 " — Landing"
- 32 Prolificant
- 34 Mithras
- 35 Fr. artist
- 40 Staff
- 41 Tatar rulers
- 42 Rebellid
- 43 Song refrain
- 44 Parvenu
- 45 Sult. Sp.
- 46 Prayer word
- 47 Sirm
- 48 Columbia player
- 49 Like omelets
- 50 Korean VIP of yore
- 51 Lot stand
- 53 Mar —

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



"If we grow enough green fuzz in the refrigerator, we can replace the living room carpet for free!"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

PRAVO

NOJEY

ADJEGG

HOBSY

WHAT TO SAY WHEN YOUR FRIENDLY SKELETON LEAVES ON VACATION.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

Saturday's Jumble: HONOR FLOOR DIMITY OUTSID

Answer: This might be more appropriate if we were given it later in life—YOUTH.

Mr. Frisk wins Grand National

LIVERPOOL, England (R) — Bold jumping Mr. Frisk, ridden by amateur jockey Marcus Armytage, won the Grand National Steeplechase at Aintree Saturday in record-breaking time after a dramatic battle with the well-fancied Durham Edition.

Mr. Frisk covered the four and a half miles (7.2 kilometres) in eight minutes 47.8 seconds, slashing 14.1 seconds off the 1973 record of Red Rum.

Mr. Frisk had been in the first two for much of the race, duelling for the lead with the Maryland Hunt cup winner Uncle Merlin, ridden by Welshman Hywel Davies.

The pair came to Becher's Brook on the second circuit 10 lengths clear of the field, but Uncle Merlin, like the winner American owned, Unseated Davies, leaving Mr. Frisk and Armytage in command.

Durham Edition, second in the 1988 Grand National, gave chase and approaching the last joined Mr Frisk in the lead.

On the long run in it looked as

if the greater experience of jockey Chris Grant might tell but Mr. Frisk, responding brilliantly to his jockey, hung on to win by three quarters of a length in one of the most exciting finishes for years.

Mr. Frisk, who revelled in the firm going, started at 16-1. Durham Edition, also racing on his favourite surface, was a 9-1 chance. The pair finished 20 lengths clear of Rims, ridden by Neale Doughty, who won the National in 1984 on Hello Dandy.

The fourth horse home in the 38-strong field was the 7-1 favourite Brown Windsor, the mount of John White. Irish raider last of the brownies, the mount of Charlie Swan, finished fifth ahead of English-trained Bismarck, partnered by Richard Dunwoody.

The big field got off to a level start with outsider Star's Delight showing the way to Uncle Merlin, Gee-A, Mr. Frisk, Polyfemus and Charter Hardware.

Approaching Becher's Brook for the first time, Uncle Merlin

was already in command, leading from Polyfemus, Mr. Frisk, Pakka Major and Brown Windsor.

Going into the straight for the first time the order was little changed. As they went out on to the second circuit Uncle Merlin and Mr. Frisk led from Polyfemus and Brown Windsor and as they approached Becher's for the second time the pair had built a healthy lead.

With the departure of Uncle Merlin, Mr. Frisk went 12 lengths clear but Rims set off in pursuit followed by Durham Edition, who had been making steady ground since the start of the second circuit.

As they turned into the straight for the final time, Mr. Frisk still had a five lengths advantage but Durham Edition has closing all the time as Rims dropped away.

Over the last there was nothing in it and the 70,000-strong crowd roared as the pair battled for the £70,870 (\$116,000) first prize.

Armytage was not to be de-

nied, riding with all the dash of a professional.

His victory was a tonic for Sister Gee, who was to have ridden in the National but had a bad fall at a minor meeting Monday.

Armytage, 25, who works as the newmarket correspondent for a racing newspaper, returned to the press room to watch the replay with his colleagues and said: "It's a dream. I didn't know that close to me but he was never going to beat us. We've just been praying all week that the weather would be kind to us and it was. He loves the firm ground."

Winning trainer Kim Bailey said: "Marcus gets on very well with the horse and he jumps well for him. My wife rides Mr. Frisk out every single day and the credit is due to her."

Davies, who won the National in 1985, said of the record-breaking time: "We weren't going that fast. I didn't plan to be out in front, it just happened."

Palace beats Liverpool

LONDON (R) — Underdogs Crystal Palace clinched a place in the English F.A. Cup final with a stunning 4-3 win over holders Liverpool in a roller-coaster of a semifinal at Villa Park Sunday.

Palace, thrashed 9-0 by Liverpool in the League earlier this season, twice came back from a goal behind to draw 3-3 at full-time and then secured their first F.A. Cup final appearance in the second period of extra time.

Alan Pardew, a bargain buy from minor league side Yeovil, headed the winner after Andy Thorn had flicked on a corner from Andy Gray in the 109th minute. Palace's third goal from a set-piece move.

Welsh international striker Ian Rush put Liverpool, the English League leaders, 1-0 up in the 14th minute with his 25th goal of the season before limping off injured.

But Palace, dangerously close to the relegation zone in the First Division, forced their way back into the tie with a goal by winger Mark Bright in the opening minute of the second half.

Gary O'Reilly put Palace 2-1 ahead after 70 minutes but two goals in two minutes for the cup holders appeared to have swung the game out of Palace's reach.

First, Steve McMahon thundered home an equaliser in the 81st and then Liverpool won a penalty when John Pemberton tripped Steve Staunton.

England striker John Barnes calmly put the holders 3-2 ahead from the spot.

But Palace refused to give up and equalised three minutes before time with a Gray header after a goalmouth scramble. They almost stole the match in the dying seconds of normal time when Thorn thumped a header against the bar.

Pardew's winning goal in extra time completed one of the biggest shocks in recent F.A. Cup history.

Manchester United were playing Second Division Oldham in the other semifinal last Sunday. Goalkeeper Neville Southall celebrated the 450th match of his career Saturday with a last-minute penalty save which helped hoist Everton to third place in the English soccer First Division.

The Welsh international keeper saved from Simon Barker to ensure Everton beat Queen's Park Rangers 1-0 on a day of only six First Division matches when top two teams Liverpool and Aston Villa were out of the ac-

tion. League cup finalists Nottingham Forest slumped to their sixth defeat in seven games by losing 3-1 at home to Tottenham Hotspur.

It was Forest's worst League run since the colourful Brian Clough took over as manager of the club 15 years ago.

Aston Villa had their key game against champions Arsenal moved to midweek to satisfy the demands of live television.

Everton took Arsenal, who have two games in hand, thanks to a 71st-minute penalty from Tony Cottee in their home game against Queen's Park Rangers (QPR) which kicked off early to prevent a clash with the Grand National horse race at nearby Aintree.

Everton's goal, transfer-listed Cottee's 11th in his last 12 matches and the 150th of his career, came after defender Brian Law was ruled to have handled the ball in the QPR area.

But the real hero of the match was captain Southall, who saved the penalty from Barker after 20-year-old Mark Wright marred his Everton debut by felling QPR's Danny Maddix.

Law, who was booked for contesting the first penalty decision, later left the pitch and needed three stitches following a clash of heads with Everton's Ray Attewell.

The win leaves Everton, who have played 33 matches, five points behind Villa on 32 matches and eight behind city rivals and F.A. Cup holders Liverpool, who have played only 31.

Forest, thrashed 4-0 by Everton in a midweek match and then publicly berated by Clough who questioned the manhood of his players, were 2-0 down at half-time after Paul Steward and Paul Allen had scored in the eighth and 44th minutes.

Marseille closes gap with rival Bordeaux

PARIS (R) — Ace marksman Jean-Pierre Papin struck again to help Marseille to a 2-2 draw in Cannes and close the gap with defeated leaders Bordeaux to one point in the French soccer first division Saturday.

Papin, who scored in Marseille's 2-1 semifinal first leg defeat of Portugal's Benfica, scored with a header in the third minute to take his tally as leading first division sharpshooter to 28.

Bordeaux suffered their first home defeat of the season when they were beaten 1-0 by Auxerre, whose goal came in the 28th minute from Poland's Waldemar Matyski.

Bordeaux, league leaders since last October, faltered at an inauspicious time, a week before they travel to Marseille for a crucial clash for the outcome of the title race.

Bordeaux dominated the second half and created countless chances, including a shot by Jean-Marc Ferreri which hit the post in the 48th minute. But they appeared unusually weary against in-form Auxerre.

Marseille, who have one game in hand, were in similar mood but managed to salvage a point along the Mediterranean coast at Cannes.

Marseille defender Alain Roche, once of Bordeaux, enabled lowly Cannes to equalise with an own goal.

Marseille reclaimed the lead through Philippe Vercurrye in the 71st minute but Alain Ravera levelled for Cannes seven minutes later to prevent Marseille from taking both points and moving to the top of the table.

Floyd takes 'enjoyable walk' towards history in Masters

AUGUSTA, Georgia (R) — Raymond Floyd, drawing "lightning out of a jug," lengthened his lead in the 1990 Masters tournament Saturday and was poised to supplant Jack Nicklaus as the oldest winner of the cherished championship.

The 47-year-old Floyd, already in the record books as the oldest player to win the U.S. Open, took an "enjoyable walk" around the manicured grounds of the Augusta National Golf Club and came away with a four-under-par 68 and a two-stroke lead going into the final round of the 54th Masters.

"I enjoyed my walk today. It is really enjoyable for me to be competitive again," said the 1976 Masters champion, whose last victory came at the 1986 U.S. Open, which he won at the unprecedented age of 43.

"It was fun, especially the way I did it," said Floyd, who was two shots ahead of Masters rookie John Huston and three better than defending champion Nick Faldo of Britain.

Nicklaus, who became the oldest Masters champion in 1986 when at age 46 he added a sixth green jacket to his record collection of five, was five shots behind Floyd after a round of 69 which belied his 50 years.

"I've drawn lightning out of a

jug," Floyd said of his 68, which featured a near-record 31 00 Augusta's treacherous hack nine, where many a Masters has been won or lost.

Floyd birdied five of his final nine holes, but only his three on the par-four 10th hole was what he called "your patented-type birdie."

He sank a 25-foot putt from off the green on the par-three 12th, chipped in from 25 feet on the 14th, recovered from a poor drive on 15 with a 15-foot birdie and rolled in a 35-footer on the 170-yard 16th, where he "thought three would be a marvelous score."

"I'm having such a ball," said Floyd, whose game deteriorated over the past two years while he was serving as the captain of the U.S. Ryder Cup team.

"I'm in a relaxed state," said Floyd, who is known for his intensity. "I've hit some hard shots, but they haven't bothered me."

Huston, 28, who earned his first trip to the Masters with a victory in Florida just last month, ran off four consecutive birdies in the middle of his round to challenge Floyd.

L. played well today. I never had to struggle," he said after matching Floyd's 68 on a cool, sunny day when Augusta's in-

famous winds did not blow too hard.

Defending champion Faldo, waiting until the third round to make his move, fired a six-under-par 66 — the best round of the day — to move within three strokes of Floyd.

"The idea of today was to get back into the ballgame," said Faldo, who did just that after he opened with 71 and 72.

"I'm in good shape, just where I wanted to be," added the 1987 British Open champion, whose 66 was just one stroke off his personal best here — a 65 in the final round last year, when he won in a playoff.

Nicklaus, whose three-under 69 was his best round in the Masters since his historic 1986 victory, said he liked his fourth place spot going into the final round.

"I'm really quite pleased with my position," Nicklaus said. "I only have three guys in front of me. If I start making some birdies, who knows?"

Scott Hoch, who lost last year's playoff to Faldo when he missed a two-foot putt on the first extra hole, slipped to a one-over 73 and dropped six shots behind.

Hoch, who started the day just one stroke behind Floyd, was tied with Bernhard Langer of West Germany, who won here in 1985

and has been in contention going into the final round every year since. Langer put himself in that position again with a 69.

Jose-Maria Olazabal of Spain, an important member of Europe's last two victorious Ryder Cup teams, and Scott Simpson, both shot 68 and were tied at 213 along with Bill Britton, who carded a 71.

Curtis Strange, the first back-to-back winner of the U.S. Open since Ben Hogan, made a move toward the lead with a three-under front nine, but he stumbled coming in and wound up at 214, tied with Tom Kite.

Kite, the career leading money winner on the U.S. PGA tour who has yet to win a major championship, posted the first 66 of the day to keep his hopes alive in the year's first major.

South African Gary Player, apparently inspired by the play of old-timers like Nicklaus and Floyd, shot an impressive 68 to lead a large group at 215.

The three-time Masters champion was joined by two-time winners Tom Watson, who shot 67, and Seve Ballesteros of Spain, who carded 68.

Also at 215 were Americans Lanny Wadkins and Fred Couples and European Ryder cupper Ronan Rafferty.

Bayern Munich retains lead

BONN (R) — Bayern Munich edged closer to the West German soccer championship Saturday by retaining their three-point lead at the top despite dropping a point in a 2-2 draw at Bayer Uerdingen.

An 87th minute equaliser by defender Wolfgang Funkel prevented Bayern claiming a victory their form merited.

With second-placed Bayer Leverkusen only managing a goalless draw at VfB Stuttgart, the European Cup semifinalists had a safe bet to retain their Bundesliga title. Six matches re-

main.

Bayern showed no sign of tiredness after their 1-0 defeat at A.C. Milan in the opening leg of the European Cup semifinals Wednesday.

Scottish striker Alan McInally put them ahead in the 34th minute before Sigi Reich equalised three minutes into the second half. Hans Dörner's 65th minute effort looked to have sealed the issue before Funkel's late strike.

The most significant performance of the day came from Bayern's West German interna-

tional Olaf Thon, who has just returned to action after being sidelined for almost six months through injury.

With the start of the World Cup finals just two months away, the diminutive Thon's impressive display in midfield against Uerdingen is sure to warm the heart of national coach Franz Beckenbauer.

"Olaf Thon had a great match when you think that he has been out of action for almost half a year," Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes said afterwards. "But we still

gave a point away."

Leverkusen's coach Juergen Gelsdorf said he was satisfied with the point against last year's UEFA Cup finalists VfB. But he knows his side must pick up every point they can to stay in touch with Bayern, who have not lost since Nov. 25.

Third-placed Cologne, beaten 3-2 at Juventus in their UEFA Cup semifinal first leg last week, narrowed the gap on Leverkusen to one point with a 3-0 home win over Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Gilbert, Van Rensburg advance to Orlando final

ORLANDO, Florida (R) — Top-seed Brad Gilbert turned in a nearly flawless performance Saturday and will take on third-seeded South African Christo Van Rensburg in the final of the \$250,000 Orlando Tennis Classic.

Gilbert, ranked fifth in the world, gave fellow American qualifier Malival Washington a tennis lesson in his 6-2, 7-5 victory and will go for his 19th career title against the South African, who eliminated unseeded American David Pate 6-7, 6-3, 7-5.

Gilbert's consistency throughout the one hour 38 minute match forced the 20-year-old Washington to take too many chances which resulted in 44 unforced errors to just nine for the top seed.

"I felt if I got ahead and moved in front, it would be an uphill

climb for him," Gilbert said. "When we were both on the baseline, I was better than him and felt he couldn't really hurt me."

The 152nd-ranked Washington settled down and played tougher in the second set, staying even through 5-5.

Gilbert, however, captured Washington's next serve on his fifth break point of the game and served out the match.

The 31st-ranked Van Rensburg, who won this tournament in 1987, struggled for almost the entire two hours 30 minute battle of serve-and-volleyers.

Navratilova, Capriati play final round today

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina (R) — American teen sensation Jennifer Capriati continued to live up to her advance billing Saturday by reaching her second final in just her third tournament since turning professional last month.

The unseeded 14-year-old overwhelmed sixth seed Natalia Zvereva of the Soviet Union 6-0, 6-4 in 57 minutes to earn a crack at world number two Martina Navratilova, who is 19 years older than Capriati, in the final of this \$500,000 clay court tournament.

Top seed Navratilova, a three-

time champion here, eliminated unseeded Regina Rajchrtova of Czechoslovakia 6-4, 6-3 without losing a single game.

"I always dreamed I would get to the finals of a pro tournament playing Martina. I'm really happy. She's a legend," said Capriati, who lost in her first final appearance to third-ranked Gabriela Sabatini last month.

Capriati, who has been pegged as a baseliner, raced through the first set against the 14th-ranked Zvereva in just 17 minutes by rushing net at every opportunity and repeatedly scoring with volley winners.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
AND TAMARA HIRSCH
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SHIELD THE WEAKNESS

Both vulnerable. South deals.

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Performances: 3:30, 8:30, 10:30

Tourists flee Kathmandu

Nepal opposition rejects talks with government

KATHMANDU (R) — Tourists trapped by a curfew after violent pro-democracy protests in Kathmandu were being evacuated from Nepal Sunday while opposition leaders rejected talks with the government and vowed to fight on.

Diplomats and tourists contacted by telephone in Kathmandu said the government was arranging special flights Sunday to take foreign tourists out of the capital, where at least 50 people were killed in a demonstration near the royal palace.

The streets of Kathmandu, normally a chaotic mix of people, pedicabs, cars and cattle, were eerily deserted.

A Western diplomat said he saw about 250 foreigners at the airport trying to get on flights, but people were not panicking.

"Everyone's just sort of relieved to be alive," he said over the telephone. "Everyone's... gratified that things have stabilised."

A Briton, contacted by telephone, said tourists in his hotel were told to pack their bags and get ready to leave.

Authorities Sunday extended a 22-hour curfew for Kathmandu to

the neighbouring ninth-century town of Bhaktapur.

Unconfirmed reports said the army opened fire on crowds in the Kathmandu Valley city of Patan, which has seen some of the most militant demonstrations in the democracy campaign.

Leaders of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), which has led a two-month campaign for multi-party democracy, rejected overtures from the new government appointed by King Birendra Friday.

Opposition leaders said they wanted face-to-face talks with the king, regarded by many Nepalis as an incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu.

Sources in the outlawed Nepali Congress Party said supreme leader Ganesh Man Singh rebuffed new Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand, who came to his

hospital bed to open a dialogue. The 75-year-old Man Singh would not agree to talks unless King Birendra first agreed to a constitutional monarchy and a multi-party political system.

The United Left Front, a grouping of Communist parties which has made a pragmatic alliance with the Nepali Congress for the democracy campaign, said it would refuse to negotiate at all with the government.

"Dialogue with the king and the king alone would be possible when the king listens to the people and declares a multi-party system," a United Left Front spokesman said.

Prakash Chandra Lohani, a government minister until he was sacked last week for opposing the crackdown, also urged the king to allow multi-party politics.

"We are facing a serious political crisis and the government is not in control of the situation," Lohani said in a statement.

Diplomats in Nepal, reached by telephone from New Delhi, said the protests were so widespread the king would eventually have to bow to the demands.

Tamil Tigers will not surrender weapons

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — The Tamil Tiger guerrillas will not surrender their weapons even if peace talks with the government succeed, the Tigers' top military leader was quoted Sunday as saying.

"We will never trust the Sri Lankan army to protect our people," Velupillai Prabhakaran said, according to the Sunday Times, a Colombo newspaper that circulates throughout the nation.

The 35-year-old guerrilla commander emerged from 2 1/2 years of hiding last week after Indian troops left the island, ending a peacekeeping mission that failed to disarm the Tigers and turned into an extended guerrilla war.

Prabhakaran and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been fighting since 1983, first against the Sri Lankan army and then against the Indian soldiers.

"The LTTE's military structure will never be dissolved," the Times quoted Prabhakaran as saying. "We trusted the Sri Lankan and Indian armies and 25,000 people died."

According to the best available reckoning, including government figures, at least 11,000 people were killed in the guerrilla war and massacres during the quest for an independent Tamil homeland in northeastern Sri Lanka.

Deputy Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne told reporters Thursday the last major obstacle in bringing peace to the northeast was to persuade the Tigers to give up their arms.

As an alternative to a surrender of weapons, the government has suggested the Tigers could be absorbed into the army and police force.

But the Sunday Times quoted Prabhakaran as saying the Tigers would "never give up their weapons or their quest for a separate homeland for their ethnic minority."

E. German parties agree on share of ministries in 'grand coalition'

EAST BERLIN (R) — After weeks of doubt, the shape of East Germany's first non-Communist government has begun to crystallise with party agreement on a share-out of ministries in a "grand coalition."

Leaders of the two major parties, the Christian Democrats (CDU) and Social Democrats (SPD), said after six hours of coalition talks Saturday night they were confident a cabinet could be presented to parliament for approval before Easter.

Two previous coalition meetings were marked by rough consensus on priorities for approaching unification talks with West Germany, but also by SPD reservations about joining a government including a rightist ally of the CDU.

But the impasse appeared to break Saturday when leaders of the CDU-led Alliance for Germany Bloc, the SPD and a Liberal Party amalgam reached tentative agreement on the distribution of 24 cabinet posts envisaged for the new government.

Martin Kirschner, general secretary of the CDU, told reporters the dominant party emerging from East Germany's first free elections on March 18 would

probably get 11 ministries. CDU chairman Lothar de Maiziere has already been designated prime minister by parliament and his party was also expected to garner the Economy Ministry among other key portfolios.

Kirschner said the SPD was in line for six cabinet seats, one of them likely to be labour and social affairs. This could satisfy the SPD's overriding concern to guarantee East Germans' generous social net in a future pan-German market economy.

Three ministries each would be awarded to the German Social Union (DSU), the CDU's small rightist election partner, and the Liberal bloc, Kirschner said. The third member of the alliance, Democratic Awakening, would get one ministry.

"We want to announce we firmly believe we can put together a government by Thursday. That is the honest common will of all parties," Kirschner said, reading a joint statement signalling an end to SPD footdragging over a coalition.

SPD spokesman Reinhard Hoepfner said a grand coalition was "not yet in the bag," an

allusion to lingering differences on security and constitutional issues, but there was little chance of it falling apart now.

A fourth round of negotiations was set for Sunday night to iron out disagreement over policy planks sure to figure prominently in merger negotiations due to begin once a viable government is installed in East Berlin.

Conservative leaders in Bonn and East Berlin want a pan-German federal state to inherit West Germany's membership in the NATO alliance. The SPD favours eventual demilitarisation and a dissolution of the two military blocs in Europe.

Another sticking point was how much West Germany's constitution as the legal basis of a united state.

The CDU-led alliance sailed to a 48 per cent victory in the March 18 elections that lowered the curtain on 40 years of Communist rule in East Germany, four months after a popular uprising overthrew the entrenched Stalinist elite.

The SPD finished with 21 per cent but was immediately courted by the alliance for amending the constitution to enable swift union with West Germany.

COLUMN

Griffith Joyner expecting first child

NEW YORK (AP) — Florence Griffith Joyner, the heroine of the 1988 Olympics, is expecting her first child in November, according to her business agent. "She was delighted to hear the news," Gordon Baskin said. Griffith Joyner won gold medals in the 100-metre and 200-metre dashes and the 400-metre relay and a silver medal in the 1,600-metre relay at the Seoul Games. She also is the world record-holder in the 100 and 200. Her husband is Al Joyner, the 1984 Olympic gold medalist in the triple jump.

Swayze wants roles with positive impact

NEW YORK (AP) — He's best known for playing the catkins cavanaugh in Dirty Dancing, but Patrick Swayze says he'd prefer the roles that once went to stars such as Spencer Tracy or Gene Kelly. "I want to have a career like Spencer Tracy, Robert Deniro, Gene Kelly, Omar Sharif. I want to do roles that have a positive impact," Swayze said in a recent interview. "With the state the world is in, I'm looking for a hero." Swayze, 37, found a hero when he was growing up. "I used my father as a pattern, and the things he believed in and stood for are still important," said Swayze, whose father died in 1982. The two were very close, and Swayze recalled his father was "always there" during his childhood. "He was a very neat man, a very gentle man. I got a very intense side from my father," he said. "Without the input of either of them, I'd never be who I am today."

Ivana Trump to make fashion her business

NEW YORK (AP) — Ivana Trump, whose estranged husband Donald said he paid her \$1 a year and all the dresses she wanted for running the Plaza Hotel, plans to make fashion her business. Women's Wear daily reported. Mrs. Trump has decided to launch her own collections of ready-to-wear clothing, accessories, jewelry and luggage in 1992, according to the trade daily. Mrs. Trump refused to say who will manufacture these collections, the daily reported, but insisted they will be made by "top companies around the world." She said her licensing arrangements were being negotiated by "a major licensing company," which she wouldn't name, according to the daily. Her spokesman, John Scanlon, said he had not seen the report. He said Mrs. Trump "has received a large number of offers to endorse a number of products and she is examining all of them." During Seventh Avenue's fashion week, Mrs. Trump has presided at the Plaza over the shows of Oscar de la Renta, Arnold Scaasi, Carolina Herrera, Rebecca Moses and Carolyn Roehm. It was her idea to attract them to the Plaza, which was purchased by her billionaire developer husband. According to the report, Mrs. Trump is spreading the word among retailers about her plans to turn from fashion patroness to designer.

Woman tallies \$171,746 in parking tickets

NEW YORK (AP) — Officials say Sylvia Matos parked her car wherever she wanted — in front of fire hydrants, at bus stops, beside expired parking metres. The result: \$171,746 in fines and the dubious title of New York's No. 1 Scofflaw. Borken down, the numbers indicate Ms. Matos collected an average 2.4 tickets a day — including holidays. Her efforts to avoid detection and collection included registering her car under 19 different addresses and 36 sets of licence plates. Unfortunately, the city doesn't expect to collect from Ms. Matos, because she probably no longer lives in New York, said Parking Violations Bureau Director Tom McEnery. He said Ms. Matos received 2,800 tickets between Dec. 31, 1984, and Feb. 28, 1988. She is the parking bureau's most wanted motorist. "She got tickets all over the place for all different things," said McEnery. "They run the gamut from double parking to expired metres to hydrants." "You're always going to find somebody trying to beat the system. But she's our no. 1, no question," the director said. "We've tried to find out where she's at, but it's a cold war."

Aquino orders inquiry into escape of failed coup leader

MANILA (Agencies) — Black-hooded rebel soldiers shot their way into a Manila prison before dawn Sunday and whisked away the leader of a failed army coup as his guards drank to celebrate a warden's birthday.

An angry President Corason Aquino ordered an investigation. "The president is mad because there was no reason for the guards in the city jail to be drinking at that time," said spokeswoman Lourdes Sytango.

About 20 armed men freed retired Lieutenant-Colonel Billy Bibit while guards drank beer which Bibit helped to buy, investigators said. One guard told them, "we were just having a little drink, sir."

Four prisoners charged with non-political crimes escaped with Bibit and two people were slightly injured in the shootout.

The military sacked the jail warden, placed his deputy and

the other guards under investigation and launched a manhunt for Bibit, one of 20 people charged with rebellion in a mutiny last December, the sixth army coup attempt against Aquino.

Armed Forces Chief General Renato de Villa ordered tighter security in military stockades to prevent the escape of other jailed rebel soldiers, a military spokesman said.

Bibit, who was captured at his Manila hideout last January, is the second alleged coup officer to escape in six weeks. Half a dozen other rebel soldiers have escaped from detention over the past two years, sparking widespread media criticism of the military for alleged inefficiency.

The presidential palace said Aquino, herself accused of weak leadership, would take "forceful action" to deal with the latest incident but did not elaborate.

The raiders whisked away Bibit

in a stolen truck after storming the prison compound with guns blazing in the raid.

"One of the Rambos (rebel soldiers) smashed the prison cell padlock with an iron bar and shouted 'go, go, go.' The colonel was already dressed up and they took him away," a prisoner said.

The escape occurred a day after the military declared a nationwide red alert for the Easter holidays amid rumours rebel soldiers might attack army stockades to free jailed comrades or launch a new coup.

Elsewhere, police Sunday captured Air Force Captain Christopher Meas, the pilot of fugitive coup leader Gregorio Honasan.

Meas flew Honasan out of the rebel-held military headquarters in Manila during an August 1987 coup attempt as government troops crushed the one-day revolt.

Georgians mark Soviet army killings

TBILISI, Soviet Union (R) — Thousands of Georgians piled flowers outside a government building in Tbilisi Sunday in memory of 20 people who died when the Soviet Army attacked a peaceful independence rally a year ago.

The pile of pink and red carnations grew steadily as friends and relatives began a series of dedications to those killed on the plaza outside the building in the republic's capital by soldiers wielding sharpened shovels and using poison gas.

The attack crystallised opposition to Moscow's continued rule over the southern republic, and the dead are now honoured as

martyrs on the road to Georgian independence.

The aftermath swept the Georgian Communist leader from office and recommitments over the attack continue in the ruling politburo in Moscow.

"It is impossible, psychologically, to forget," Nodar Notadze said.

An all-night vigil was planned for midnight Sunday, and a protest march through the city centre has been set for Monday. Organisers expect as many as 500,000 people, half the city's population, to take part.

Students at Tbilisi School Number 51, where two of the dead were enrolled, remembered

their fallen classmates with a poetry reading.

Friends and relatives gathered at a theatre to hear youngsters relieve the horror.

"In the morning I came to Rustaveli Boulevard and I saw the killings. In the future there will never be such a day," one seven-year-old said.

There have been no reports of violence and troops are keeping a low profile in Tbilisi.

But local journalists said they saw tanks and militiamen gathering some 12 kilometres outside the city centre. Rumours sweeping Tbilisi said army helicopters would fly overhead during the vigil.

Over 100 states to attend London drug conference

LONDON (AP) — Ministers and senior officials from more than 100 nations gather in London Monday for a three-day conference on ways to reduce the appetite for illicit drugs, particularly cocaine.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Colombian President Virgilio Barco and U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar will address the opening session of the world ministerial drugs summit.

"The drug issue is growing in significance month by month and year by year," said Home Office Minister David Mellor. "The more we look at the issue, the more apparent it is that international cooperation is not an option, but a necessity."

He singled out Barco as "a courageous representative of a drug nation struggling against drug traffickers."

The conference, organised by the British government in association with the United Nations, follows up on the international conference on drug abuse and illicit trafficking, which was held in Vienna in June 1987.

That conference agreed for the first time on an overall approach to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and reducing narcotics trafficking.

British officials said the London conference would follow the same approach.

"Drugs are no longer a social problem of the rich and pam-

pered," said Lynda Chalker, minister for overseas development.

"I believe unless we make our approach comprehensive, we will fail. We have to tackle all issues at once if we are to have a chance to win," she told reporters at a briefing on the conference.

Britain has invited all members of the United Nations and all non-member observer states. Chalker said her government is paying the expenses of delegations from some developing countries.

Mellor said the conference was concentrating on curbing demand because it was at the root of drug abuse.

"We know in the end as long as demand is there, there will always be somebody to get the supply through," he said.

The conference will consider education programmes to prevent drug use, identification of drug misusers and early intervention to prevent misuse.

Organisers decided to single out cocaine, Mellor said, because "cocaine has suddenly come from nowhere to be the principle drug of misuse, not only here but elsewhere in the world."

"The American experience shows that we underestimate cocaine at our peril, especially when mixed with smoking as crack," he said, referring to a highly addictive crystallised form of cocaine.

Romanian parties draw up battle lines for elections

BUCHAREST (R) — Romania's politicians formed battle lines Sunday for free elections in May, with the ruling National Salvation Front (NSF) squaring off against a loose alliance of centrist parties.

The front, which includes Communists, formally elected interim President Ion Iliescu as its leader and he urged party members to go all-out for victory in the country's first democratic vote in five decades.

"The National Salvation Front has a special political duty for the country. We must win this election," Iliescu told cheering supporters at a front rally.

"This is not a narrow objective. The front is the only political force capable of stopping the right-wing forces," he said, referring to the main opposition parties. "We must do everything to bar the way of the right."

Iliescu, a 57-year-old former Communist Party official sidelined by executed Stalinist ruler Nicolae Ceausescu, is already the front-running candidate for the presidency and his party is leading in opinion polls ahead of the voting on May 20.

The front's main challengers, three centrist opposition parties, announced a non-aggression pact Sunday but stopped short of forming a coalition.

The National Peasants Party, the National Liberals and the Social Democrats said in a joint statement they would avoid attacking each other with the aim of "a common fight against the enemies of the true democracy."

The front's anti-Communist rivals have branded the front, which came to power after last December's uprising which ousted Ceausescu, as the inheritor of the Communist mantle.

The front denies the charge and says it took command of the country in the national interest. Iliescu said nearly one million of Romania's 23 million people were members of the front and described its ideology as centrist.

As election formations became clearer, demonstrators for and against the front took to the streets of Bucharest.

Small groups carrying flowers and waving red, blue and yellow national flags marched to a big rally called by the front to end its congress which confirmed Iliescu as party chairman.

Anti-Communist groups massed in a central square in the capital. Protesters shouted "down with Communism, down with Iliescu." One banner read: "Down with the activist Iliescu — the heroes did not die for the Communist mafia of the National Salvation Front."

The three main opposition parties said their candidates would compete against each other and against Iliescu in the first round of voting for the presidency.

Alliance candidates declared so far are National Liberal leader Radu Campeanu and Ion Ratiu, a millionaire who returned from exile in the West after the revolution and is running for the Peasants Party.

The three parties said that if no

candidate won an outright majority in the first round, they would all support the alliance candidate who remained in the running.

In the election for a two-chamber parliament, to be conducted under a proportional representation system, they would have separate lists, the statement said.

The three parties, successors of century-old formations crushed during 43 years of Communist rule, said they would not take part in "a government formed by a political organisation built upon old Communist structures" — a clear reference to the front.

Iliescu's party is favourite to win Romania's first free poll in half a century, which 68 parties plan to contest.

An opinion poll published Saturday said 57 per cent of the 16 million voters would opt for the front, followed by 17 per cent for the National Liberals.

Meanwhile Ceausescu's home town, which experienced the best and the worst of the executed Communist leader's regime, is having a hard time adjusting to democracy.

Residents say they were pleased when Scornicești's best-known son was overthrown in a popular uprising last December and welcome the new multi-party system to be put to the test in elections next month.

But here, as in towns and villages across the country, uncertainty over the future looks likely to produce a big vote for Ceausescu's successors, the National Salvation Front.

"This adversarial system —

people are not used to competition between parties," sighed local council President Iie Manea.

"We don't understand how democracy works," said Nicolina Mateescu, wife of a local priest. "We grew accustomed to a single party and we obeyed what we had to do. It's very difficult to adjust."

An old man said the town's 17,000 people were pleased when Ceausescu was toppled.

"In a way there was good and bad in December," he said. "It was good that we got rid of the devil... but we don't know what is going to happen."

There is no sign of campaigning for the May 20 election in Scornicești, 150 kilometres west of Bucharest, and local leaders say the ruling front, which assumed power after the uprising, is certain to win most of the votes here.

Scornicești officials were replaced immediately after the revolution. The town museum, devoted partly to the Ceausescu clan, was turned into a school.

Vandals smashed the white marble cross on the grave of Ceausescu's parents in the cemetery a month ago. But the small white family house, unoccupied, remains intact.

The change of regime was peaceful here — reflecting, perhaps, ambivalence over the downfall of a native son who brought prosperity to the town.

Ceausescu left Scornicești at the age of 13 to train as a shoemaker in Bucharest and when in power came back on visits little more than once a year.

Although he gave himself grand titles like "the conductor" (leader), he was derided by Bucharest demonstrators as "the cobbler."

Scornicești has clothing and car parts factories, a brewery and — unusually for such a small town — a big sports stadium with a national league soccer team. The roads have fewer potholes than many other towns.

"Scornicești was regarded as privileged," said Gheorghe Beciu, a youth centre director in nearby Slatina, the county town. "It got forced development... it was resented," he said. Scornicești regularly emerged in local statistics with the top farm output.

Despite its special status, the town also felt the excesses of Ceausescu's regime.

Manea said it suffered the same shortages of food, fuel and consumer goods which built up resentment against him across the country. "We got no special favours," he said.

Living in Ceausescu's birthplace was no bed of roses because some of his relatives lived there too, local people say.

Tales of high-handed treatment by Ceausescu's sister, Elena Barbulescu, and her family are commonplace.

Barbulescu, 62, was arrested after the revolution and was last reported under investigation on corruption charges. She was heard denying her guilt before a public prosecutor on television in February. No trial date has been announced.